

**STOP**  
multinationals  
**promoting**  
**and pushing**  
**unhealthy**  
**synthetic 'food'**



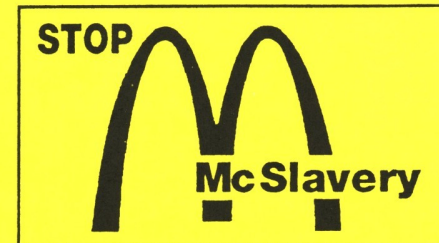
organise now for a better world  
PEOPLE AND NATURE - NOT PROFITS

**STOP**  
cattle ranching  
**destroying**  
**forests,**  
**wildlife and**  
**the soil**



organise now for a better world  
PEOPLE AND NATURE - NOT PROFITS

**STOP**  
multinationals  
**exploiting workers**  
**- low pay, hard**  
**and degrading**  
**work, no unions**



organise now for a better world  
PEOPLE AND NATURE - NOT PROFITS

**STOP**  
the meat industry  
**imprisoning,**  
**torturing and**  
**murdering millions**  
**of animals**



organise now for a better world  
PEOPLE AND NATURE - NOT PROFITS

# What's Wrong with McDonald's?

***Glasgow's rapid increase of fast (trash) food shops have created Europe's ill-health capital. Its rat-infested slaughterhouse provides the raw material for Big Macs. The reward for years of intensive-farm suffering, a bloody, violent end. But as Deaths from Cancer, Heart Disease, Hypertension and Diabetes reach endemic proportions - the unfortunate cows may well be having the last laugh!***

## McDonald's Ruin Your Health.

**O**n the health issue McDonald's defensiveness is worthy of the tobacco companies whose products are equally lethal. In Britain alone, over 24 million people are currently making a conscious decision to reduce red meat consumption. Over 11 million are confirmed vegetarians with over 38,000 quitting meat eating every week. Why?

A major factor appears to be the upsurge of viruses and diseases in livestock, which many experts fear may be transmitted to human consumers. Despite government predictions, the number of cattle contracting B.S.E. (or Mad Cow Disease) have increased relentlessly. Cattle infected with the virus enter the food chain simply because no test exists. B.I.V. (a form of human AIDS) has emerged this year wiping out entire herds - unbelievably the cows were deemed fit for human consumption!

Equally damning, a 1994 report published in the British Medical Journal revealed vegetarians are 40% less likely to die of cancer than meat eaters. The report's findings represents the single biggest breakthrough in cancer prevention in 40 years!

The bad news for McDonald's does not end there however. Meat eating is linked to Britain's Biggest Killer - Coronary Heart Disease as well as Diabetes and Hypertension. Meat is the cause of most food poisoning outbreaks. In 1991 McDonald's were responsible for an outbreak of food poisoning in the UK in which people suffered serious kidney failure. It is worrying that McDonald's target young children in multi-million pound advertising campaigns to promote their toxic products!

## McDonald's Destroy the Earth.

Multinational companies are destroying the world's most precious forests at an appalling rate. If present trends continue all Central and Southern American rainforests will disappear by the year 2010. McDonald's have been forced to admit to using beef reared on ex-rainforest land, preventing the regeneration of forests. Also, the use of farmland by multinationals forces local people to inhabit other areas, cutting down further trees.

McDonald's, with 24 billion pounds annual turnover is the world's largest user of beef. Methane emitted by cattle reared for the meat industry is a major cause of 'global warming' crisis.

Every year McDonald's use thousands of tons of unnecessary packaging much of which ends up littering our streets, or polluting the countryside buried in landfill sites.

To suggest that McDonald's is concerned with the environment is comparable with their absurd claim that their pre-digested filth is good for you!

## McDonald's Murder Animals.

The statistics of cruelty are shocking. Last year over 750 million animals were destroyed in Britain. Every minute of every working day 4,000 die in slaughterhouses. Despite our space-age technology most of our fellow creatures experience brutal, savage deaths in great pain. 'Humane slaughter' is a myth propagated by the industry in response to concerns at this needless massacre.

Meat-eating would disappear overnight if flesh-eaters had to kill the creatures personally. Most deal with this problem simply by ignoring it - preferring instead to delegate the whole fearsome business to anonymous slaughtermen in distant slaughterhouses, as far away from our own sensibilities as possible. And we're actually encouraged to do this by the meat industry. They don't want our consciences troubled - it's bad for business!

## McDonald's Exploit Their Staff.

The scale of exploitation at McDonald's is such that the expression 'McJob' has emerged. 'McJobs' are low status, low wage, non-union, unsatisfactory jobs with no fringe benefits and no prospects of advancement. With over 88% of their staff working less than 35 hours per week, McDonald's have been at the forefront of the widescale introduction of part-time labour in Britain's workforce.

McDonald's refuse to pay overtime rates even when employees work extremely long hours. Pressure to keep profits high and wage costs low results in understaffing, so employees work harder and faster. The majority of employees have few job options and are forced to accept exploitation. Not surprisingly staff turnover is high, making unionisation difficult. This suits McDonald's who vigorously oppose all unions.

## McDonald's Starves the Poor.

While millions of people are starving, vast areas of land in poor countries are used for cattle ranching or to grow grain to feed animals destined for Western tables.

McDonald's continually promote meat products, encouraging people to eat more meat, wasting more food resources. 145 million tons of grain fed to livestock produce less than 21 million tons of meat products. With a vegetarian diet Britain could easily become self-sufficient in food. Equally important, vegetarian diets cost substantially less than carnivores.

## McDonald's: What Can You Do?

As the Government's cry that British Beef is safe has an increasingly hollow ring, this leaflet illustrates reality is somewhat different. Boycott McDonald's and other trash-food joints now. Try a vegetarian diet high in fruit and fibre. In safeguarding your health your food budget will decrease considerably. Join the Federation in its fight against ignorance, depravation, cruelty and greed!

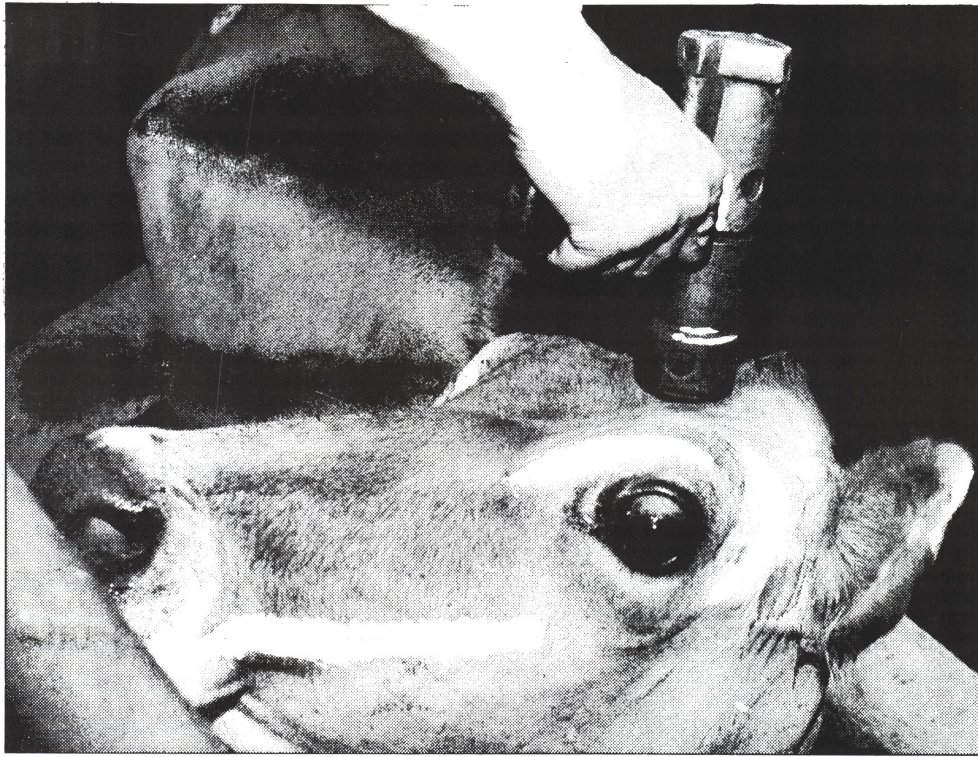
***Campaign Against McDonald's***

***P.O. Box 1008***

***Glasgow***

***G42 8AA***





*Hand of death: a slaughterman about to kill a cow, with a bolt through her head. Many animals remain conscious and experience excruciating pain.*

# Do the right thing

*Before you eat your  
next burger the  
Campaign Against  
McDonald's want to  
feed you a few facts...*



# What's Wrong With McDonald's?



McDonald's spend a fortune on advertisements, trying to cultivate an image of being a 'caring' and 'green' company that is also a fun place to eat. Children are lured in (dragging their parents behind them) with the promise of 'free' toys and other gimmicks. But behind the smiling face of Ronald McDonald lies the reality - McDonald's only interest is money, making profits from whoever and whatever they can.

## STARVING THE POOR

While millions of people are starving, vast areas of land in poor countries are used for cattle ranching or to grow grain to feed animals to be eaten in the West.

McDonald's continually promote meat products, encouraging people to eat meat more often, which wastes more and more food resources. 145 million tons of grain fed to livestock produces only 21 million tons of meat and by-products. On a vegetarian diet Britain could easily be self-sufficient in food.

## DESTROYING THE EARTH

The world's most beautiful forests are being destroyed at an appalling rate by multinational companies. McDonald's have at last been forced to admit to using beef reared on ex-rainforest land, preventing the regeneration of forests. Also, the use of farmland by multinationals and their suppliers forces local people to move on to other areas and cut down further trees.

McDonald's is the world's largest user of beef. Methane emitted by cattle reared for the beef industry is a major cause of the 'global warming' crisis.

Every year McDonald's use thousands of tons of unnecessary packaging much of which ends up littering our streets or polluting the land buried in landfill sites.

## RUINING YOUR HEALTH

McDonald's promote their food as 'healthy', but the reality is that it is high in fat, sugar and salt, and low in fibre and vitamins. A diet of this type is linked with a greater risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes and other diseases. Their food also contains many chemical additives, some of which may cause ill health, and hyperactivity in children.

Don't forget too that meat is the cause of the majority of food poisoning incidents. In 1991 McDonald's were responsible for an outbreak of food poisoning in the UK, in which people suffered serious kidney failure.

## MURDERING ANIMALS

The menus of the burger chains are based on the torture and murder of millions of animals. Most are intensively farmed, with no access to fresh air and sunshine, and no freedom of movement. Their deaths are barbaric - 'humane



**McLIBEL TRIAL CONTINUING UNTIL END OF 1995 - see over...**



# McLibel breaks record on 292nd day

## Hearing becomes the biggest Mac of all

**Patricia Wynn Davies**  
Legal Affairs Editor

Someone had brought along a model of a milestone to the picket outside the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand. The "McLibel" trial had reached its 292nd day – making it the longest of any kind in British history.

To anyone who has ever had dealings with the courts, it is the kind of record that inspires only weariness and depression.

But Helen Steel and Dave Morris, the McLibel defendants, were in doughty mood yesterday. "It's a milestone for us and critics of the food industry, but a millstone for the \$30bn dollar a year McDonald's corporation."

The McLibel Support Campaign is comparing the marathon battle with the fast-food giant to the 18th century Tichborne personation case, cited in the *Guinness Book of Records*, which comprised a civil and a criminal trial lasting a total of 291 days.

Apart from a connection in both to South American rainforests, any similarities between them end there.

In the Tichborne case, where an imposter posed as the heir to a fortune after being presumed to have met his death in the South American jungles, society ladies crammed the public galleries and the Chief Justice had to institute a ticket system, *Botham v Khan* style.

The public never turns up for the McLibel saga, a non-jury trial before Mr Justice Bell with no histrionics, just painstaking,

detailed allegation and counter-allegation. Even the ever-conscientious Press Association news agency has given up trying to make a story of the proceedings as the two litigants in person seek to refute each and every allegation by Richard Rampton, McDonald's ultra-smooth QC.

For Ms Steel, a 31-year-old otherwise full-time single par-

ent, and Mr Morris, 42, who works in a club, there was no option but to fight the case after McDonald's served writs in September 1990 over a London Greenpeace (no relation to the worldwide Greenpeace organisation) leaflet entitled "What's Wrong With McDonald's".

Three other defendants reluctantly apologised over the six-page factsheet's allegations over

the promotion of "junk" food, exploitation of workers and animals, advertising to children and damage to the environment. For Ms Steel and Mr Morris, veterans of CND, the anti-poll tax campaign, the Wapping picket and the miners' strike, caving in was not in their nature.

As the McDonald's corporation has thrown seemingly unlimited resources at the case,

the exercise appears increasingly futile. The McLibel Support Campaign claims that 2 million copies of the allegedly libellous leaflet have been handed out in the UK alone since the case began.

And in a foretaste of a European Court of Human Rights battle still to come, Ms Steel and Mr Morris complain that the UK's "oppressive" libel laws

have denied them legal aid but allowed the corporation to demand proof over a wide range of "common sense" issues in the leaflet, like the fact that packaging ends up as litter.

The case, which the image-conscious corporation hoped to either settle or dispose of within a month, has become a nightmare, spawning what seems to be a largely libel-proof, ever-growing anti-McDonald's information exchange.

At the McLibel Support Campaign, Dan Mills, a 28-year-old former trainee solicitor with the city law firm Lovell White Durrant, claims thousands of supporters round the world, while McInformation Network, an international network of volunteers, claims its McSpotlight internet site – containing masses of everything McDonald's would rather people were not told – has been accessed more than 4 million times.

Try as it may, McDonald's is waging an increasingly uphill – perhaps impossible – battle to force the genie back into the bottle.



Food for thought: Helen Steel and Dave Morris – 'a milestone for us, but a millstone for McDonald's'.

THE INDEPENDENT

SATURDAY 2 NOVEMBER 1996



energy dense. People consuming these diets characteristically have a high intake of fat (especially saturated fat) and free sugars and a relatively low intake of complex carbohydrates (from starchy, fibre-containing foods).

Mr Cannon agreed that for those seeking to improve the population's health it was "not sensible or responsible to encourage people to eat foods nutritionally worse than the dietary guidelines". Such food could "be reasonably considered as being unhealthy" and a "negative contribution" to the diet.

**Dr Neal Barnard**, President of the US Physicians' Committee for Responsible Medicine and an expert on nutrition and health, said on behalf of the Defendants "many products sold at McDonald's are high in fat and cholesterol, and low in fibre and certain vitamins", and as a result these products "contribute to heart disease, certain forms of cancer and other diseases" (including obesity, diabetes, and hypertension). The links between diet and these now epidemic diseases are, he said, "established beyond any reasonable doubt", and were causal in nature. During Dr Barnard's evidence, Richard Rampton QC (for McDonald's) conceded that "we would all agree" that there is a link between a high fat, low fibre diet and cancer of the breast and colon.

Dr Barnard pointed out that, in addition to the problem of consuming too much fat and too little fibre in the diet, there is also increasing concern in the US about the carcinogenic mutagens which form on the surface of grilled and fried meat.

Dr Barnard stated that "McDonald's products clearly contain significantly more fat than government guidelines and health authorities recommend". Evidence had shown that "fatty foods tend to be habituating" and "increase the likelihood of continued high fat intake". "McDonald's food remains part of the problem, rather than part of the solution". He quoted the director of a major study into heart disease, Dr William Castelli who said "When you see the Golden Arches you're probably on the road to the pearly gates."

**Professor Michael Crawford**, an expert on dietary fats and their relation to human health, and a consultant to the World Health Organisation gave evidence for the Defendants. He emphasised the association between a high fat diet and increased risk of cancers of the breast, colon and prostate cancer. This is particularly evident from 'population studies' of different countries with varied diets and disease rates, from 'migration' studies (showing that immigrant populations soon adopted the diet and disease rates of the country of settlement), and from the large increase of heart disease and cancer in countries such as Japan where the modern western diet is fast replacing traditional, healthier diets. He stated that "not only are McDonald's encouraging the use of a style of food which is closely associated with risk of cancer and heart disease whilst health professionals are trying to reduce the risks to Western populations, but they are actively promoting the same in cultures where at present these diseases are not a problem".

#### Expansion and Subversion

**Peter Cox**, former marketing consultant, and also former Chief Executive of the Vegetarian Society, gave evidence for the Defence as an expert on the marketing of food. He quoted from 'Behind the Arches', a book authorised by McDonald's in 1987, as evidence that McDonald's were engaged in 'a strategy of subversion' by trying to alter the dietary preferences of whole nations, 'very often for the worse'. Mr Cox read the following quotes from 'Behind the Arches':

In Japan, McDonald's faced "a fundamental challenge of establishing beef as a common food". Their President, Den Fujita, stated "the reason Japanese people are so short and have yellow skins is because they have eaten nothing but fish and rice for two thousand years"; "if we eat McDonald's hamburgers and potatoes for a thousand years we will become taller, our skin become white and our hair blonde". The book says that Fujita "aimed virtually all his advertising at children and young families", and that he stated "we could teach the children that the hamburger was something good". The company also changed eating habits in Australia. Peter Ritchie (McDonald's Australian president) said he "attributes that change to the influence McDonald's has on children". The book concludes that rather than adapt to local tastes and preferences "McDonald's foreign partners made major changes in marketing in order to sell the American system".

Professor Crawford explained how "modern beef production has become distorted from the wild nature of food to which we are physiologically adapted" in that modern cattle are intensively reared for fast weight gain, resulting in unnaturally high levels of fat, particularly saturated fat. Meat from modern domestic cattle was in excess of 25% carcass fat, compared to 2-5% in wild animals.

**Dr Tim Lobstein**, co-director of the Food Commission, a consumer organisation, gave evidence for the Defence as an expert on food policy issues. On studying eight suggested typical McDonald's 'meal combinations', he concluded that they are "generally imbalanced with regard to their nutrient content". He said they are "excessively fatty and salty", and correspondingly low in "nutrient density" of several essential nutrients such as vitamins and minerals. A Food Commission survey in 1987 had found that 31% of people questioned at fast food stores in Peckham ate fast food every day, and that 9% of the total sample ate *burgers* every day. Dr Lobstein concluded that there were sections of the population eating an very unbalanced diet - this view was backed by reference to other surveys. He was particularly concerned by the diets of school children, and also by the expansion of McDonald's promotions in schools and hospitals.

McDonald's line that their food can be eaten as part of a balanced diet was, according to Dr Lobstein, "meaningless". He said "you could eat a roll of sellotape as part of a balanced diet". Rather than using the word 'balance', he would



suggest greater consumption of healthy foods. "McDonald's tends to take the basic food ingredients and add fat, salt and sugar, so encouraging their customers to eat a worse diet."

**Peter Cox** referred to a company document from 1985 (not available in stores) which made it absolutely clear that the company was aware even then of the links between diet and diseases - it specified heart disease, cancer, diabetes and obesity. It was his opinion therefore that the effect of the company's efforts to promote their products as 'good, nutritious food' over the years was "to debase the concept of 'healthy eating' to no more than a cynical sales promotional ploy".

Mr Cox explained that the company's claim to be concerned about healthy eating was not borne out by the products sold. Even their salads (still only available in some stores) had a 'ludicrously high' fat content (over 50% calories from fat) He told how the company were now promoting their newest menu item - the "Mega Mac" which comprises 4 meat patties and contains huge amounts of fat and saturated fat. He said there was a huge 'credibility gap' - the difference between the image portrayed...and the reality of the food sold'. He believed that the few positive steps made had been taken 'perhaps rather grudgingly' as a result of public pressure.

#### Advertising Deceit

**Stephen Gardner**, former Assistant Attorney General of Texas, gave evidence for the Defence. He explained how in 1987 McDonald's began a major, but deceptive, advertising campaign. The company claimed it was an "informational" campaign about the content of their food. However, the company's own internal magazine stated that the aim was "a long term commitment beginning with a year long advertising schedule" .... "to neutralise the junk food misconceptions about McDonald's good food." The buzz words in almost all the ads were "nutrition", "balance" and "McDonald's good food". After the series of ads hit the news-stands, the Attorney General of Texas, in conjunction with the two other major states wrote a letter to McDonald's on 24th April 1987 stating:

"The Attorneys General of Texas, California and New York have concluded our joint review of McDonald's recent advertising campaign which claims that McDonald's food is nutritious. Our mutual conclusion is that this advertising campaign is deceptive. We therefore request that McDonald's immediately cease and desist further use of this advertising campaign. The reason for this is simple: McDonald's food is, as a whole, not nutritious. The intent and result of the current campaign is to deceive customers into believing the opposite. Fast food customers often choose to go to McDonald's because it is inexpensive and convenient. They should not be fooled into eating there because you have told them it is also nutritious. ...The new campaign appears intended to pull the wool over the public's eyes."

The court heard that an internal company memo, reporting on a high level meeting in March 1986 with public relations advisors prior to this advertising campaign stated "McDonald's should attempt to deflect the basic negative thrust of our critics.....How do we do this? By talking 'moderation and balance'. We can't really address or defend nutrition. We don't sell nutrition and people don't come to McDonald's for nutrition".

Mr Gardener also referred the court to some of the specific examples of inaccuracies and distortions in the 16 individual advertisements. He related how, after the three States had threatened legal action if the ads were repeated, McDonald's promised to stop the ads. At the current trial McDonald's claim that the ads were not dropped and were later printed again. However, none of the four ads they said had been run after the threats were the specific ads referred to in the complaints and none mentioned "nutrition", "balance" or "McDonald's good food".

Mr Gardner stated that to the average consumer the word nutritious "conveys a sense of a healthy product that is not deleterious to one's physical well-being. Specifically, a product that is nutritious is one that does not contain excessive amounts of nutrients that should be avoided, such as fats, sodium and the like"

#### Just what do they mean by 'Nutritious' ?

There seemed to be agreement amongst McDonald's representatives as to what nutritious meant. **Edward Oakley**, **Chief Purchasing Officer and Senior Vice-President of McDonald's UK**, is responsible for the nutrition guides currently available in McDonald's stores. When asked what 'nutritious' means in the guide he stated "foods that contain nutrients. Asked if there was any food he knew of that is not nutritious he said "I do not know if you would call it food or not, but you could put up an argument for black coffee or black tea or mineral water". Asked "what about Coca Cola?", he said "Coca Cola has a good source of energy, no question of that", he was then asked if he thought it was nutritious, to which he stated "yes, it can be". **David Green**, **Senior Vice-President of Marketing (USA)**, had a similar view on what nutritious meant. He also thought Coca Cola was nutritious, he said that it was 'providing water, and I think that is part of a balanced diet'.

Even **Professor Wheelock**, McDonald's, consultant on nutrition, defined the word nutritious to mean "contains nutrients". He then accepted that all foods have nutrients. When asked to define 'junk food' he said it was 'whatever a person doesn't like' (in his case semolina). With disbelief mounting in the courtroom, Richard Rampton (McDonald's Q.C.) intervened to say that McDonald's was not objecting to the description of their food as 'junk food'!

#### Additives

**Dr Erik Millstone**, an expert on food additives raised concerns about the safety of nine additives used by McDonald's.

- **Sunset Yellow (E110)** - a synthetic colourant, which can provoke allergic reactions and hyperactivity; and increased incidence of tumours in animals; banned in Norway.
- **Amaranth(E123)** - a synthetic colourant, which can provoke asthma, eczema and hyperactivity; it caused birth defects and foetal deaths in some animal tests, possibly also cancer; banned in the USA, Russia and at least 5 other countries.
- **Sodium Nitrite (E250) and Potassium Nitrate (E252)** - preservatives and colour fixatives, which may provoke hyperactivity and other adverse reactions; potentially carcinogenic; their use is severely restricted in many countries.
- **BHA (E320) & BHT (E321)** - synthetic antioxidants, which may trigger hyperactivity and other intolerances; serious concerns over carcinogenicity; BHA is banned in Japan; in 1958 & 1963 official committees of experts recommended that BHT be banned in the UK, however due to industry pressure it was not banned; McDonald's eliminated BHT from their *US products* by 1986.
- **Carrageenan (E407)** - stabiliser and thickening agent; linked to toxic hazards, including ulcers and cancer; the most serious concerns relate to degraded carrageenan, which is not a permitted additive. However, native carrageenan, which is used, may become degraded in the gut.
- **Monosodium Glutamate (621)** - flavour enhancer, which can cause intolerant reactions and effect chemistry of the brain.
- **Potassium Bromate (924)** - used as flour improver, banned in 1989 as a dangerous carcinogen; previously widely used in bread products, including McDonald's buns.

Dr Millstone said that as regulatory bodies judged the safety of additives, and consequently their regulatory status largely by reference to tests on animals, they should be consistent in interpreting results and any adverse effects shown should be taken seriously. However in several cases where additives had produced adverse effects (including cancer) in animals, the additives were nonetheless permitted for use (including many of the 9 additives in issue). In contrast if an additive did not produce adverse effects in animals it was officially assumed it would be harmless to humans.

He believed that where there were doubts over the safety of additives the benefit of the doubt should be given to the consumer, not to the compound or the industry. He said "if the object of the exercise was the protection of public health rather than helping companies negotiate their way through regulatory hurdles" then the approach he advocated would be adopted.

Dr Millstone's view was that the additives listed should be banned because of doubts over their safety, but in the meantime it was essential for additives to be properly labelled. He said he could see 'no particular difficulty at all for McDonald's in providing comprehensive ingredient listing' on the packaging.

#### ADVERTISING

McDonald's Annual Report records that in 1993 worldwide expenditure for advertising and promotions totalled \$1.4 billion, about 6% of sales. \$870m is spent annually in the USA alone. McDonald's UK spend approx £35m per year.

**Mr Hawkes, McDonald's UK Chief Marketing Officer**, said the purpose of advertising is 'communication', and 'persuasion', to foster 'brand awareness' and 'loyalty', in order to increase sales. 'You have to keep your name in front of people's minds.' Without advertising, he said, 'you might see the company decline completely'. He considered that advertising was 'a key element of free speech in this country'.

He said that McDonald's concentrate on TV as 'the most powerful advertising medium'. In the UK the company advertises on TV to children, in particular 2 to 8 year olds, most weeks of the year. Mr Hawkes, hoped that teaching them McDonald's songs would "keep the memory of McDonald's at the forefront of their minds so they can again ask their parents if they can come to McDonald's". The company didn't target 8 to 15 year olds so much, Mr Hawkes said. 'At that age they do not pester their parents to go to McDonald's. It does not work in the same way'. He stated that when McDonald's was launched in a new region or country (this included Scotland a few years ago), the company would at first advertise exclusively to children. He said "one of the tactics is to reach families through children".

Incredibly, **Paul Preston McDonald's UK President** claimed that the character Ronald McDonald was intended not to "sell food" to children, but to promote the "McDonald's experience". However, he did agree that Ronald "is a useful marketing tool". It was revealed in court that Geoffrey Giuliano, the main Ronald McDonald actor in the 1980's had quit and publicly apologised, stating "I brainwashed youngsters into doing wrong. I want to say sorry to children everywhere for selling out to concerns who make millions by murdering animals".

Extracts from the corporation's official and confidential 'Operations Manual' were read out giving an insight into the company's strategy: "*Children are often the key decision-makers concerning where a family goes to eat*". Offering toys is "*one of the best things...to make them loyal supporters*". Birthday parties are "*an important way to generate added sales and profits*". Ronald McDonald "*is a strong marketing tool*". "*Ronald loves McDonald's and McDonald's food. And so do children, because they love Ronald. Remember, children exert a phenomenal influence when it comes to restaurant selection. This means that you should do everything you can to appeal to children's love for Ronald and McDonald's.*"



McDonald's internal code for their ads states that an aim is to make people feel 'a warm empathy towards the commercial' and therefore, he agreed, 'feel an empathy towards the company'. **David Green, McDonald's Senior Vice President of Marketing in the USA** denied this was 'manipulating people's emotions'. He also denied 'brainwashing children with Ronald McDonald' or having a 'hidden agenda' in the use of Ronald. However, he recognised that McDonald's 'could change people's eating habits' and that children were 'virgin ground as far as marketing is concerned'.

He agreed that community and charitable activity was 'a benefit to the company' and 'good business' which gained 'free publicity', and he related how 'educational' promotions in schools "generate better feelings" towards McDonald's and lead to more 'patronage'.

Mr Green stated that McDonald's didn't propose that people could sensibly eat the company's food 'as part of a diet composed largely of that kind of food'. He said 85-95% of Americans visit McDonald's, although a quarter of their customers ('heavy users') made 75% of all visits. 11% of visits were from 'Super Heavy Users', who ate there 4 or more times per week. Mr Green said their marketing strategy was to target heavy users to increase their frequency of visits. He denied there was a 'huge credibility gap' between the reality of McDonald's food and the way they portrayed it.

**Alistair Fairgrieve, McDonald's UK Marketing Services Manager**, stated "it is our objective to dominate the communications area...because we are competing for a share of the customer's mind". He outlined some of the research undertaken by the company to discover what customers were thinking and the effects of advertising. He explained that questions were asked about seventeen 'functional' and 'emotional' attributes which were 'ranked in terms of importance' to McDonald's. "At the top there are the ones by which we stand or fall." At the bottom were four categories: 'Food is Filling', 'Good Value For Money', 'Use Top Quality Ingredients', and finally 'Nutritious Food'.

During 1991, worried that customers were visiting less frequently, the company conducted a survey. This revealed that such customers characterised the company as being "loud, brash, American, successful, complacent, uncaring, insensitive, disciplinarian, insincere, suspicious, arrogant".

**Juliet Gellatley**, former Director of Youth Education and Campaigns of the Vegetarian Society, currently Director of VIVA (an educational charity), gave evidence for the Defence about the effects on young people of McDonald's advertising. As Director for Youth Education she gave talks to about 30,000 children of all ages at 500 classroom debates, and also to thousands of adults as well on vegetarianism and related issues. Following the talks children discussed changing their diets. On many occasions, of those interested in "going vegetarian" some felt they couldn't because they would be the "odd one out" or "be laughed at" if they couldn't go to McDonald's. They often indicated that this was "because of the hype" and when questioned further they talked about McDonald's advertisements which they had seen. She stated she had been surprised that "McDonald's was the only burger chain specifically mentioned" in any of the talks, and that it came up "so often".

Ms Gellatley stated that McDonald's claim that they don't exploit children because "children are never encouraged to ask their parents to bring them to McDonald's" was "farcical". "Clearly the main purpose of advertising aimed at 2 to 8 year olds is precisely to encourage children to ask their parents to take them to McDonald's, otherwise what would be the point in advertising directly to such young children". How could young children, she said, "differentiate between what is real and what is not", "what is good for them and what is bad", and "between being sold to and not being sold to". "I think McDonald's play on that as much as they possibly can...this is what I mean by exploiting children." She related how the younger kids "kept mentioning...Ronald McDonald" who they "obviously looked up to" as "just a pure and positive and fun character and something quite real to them". She said, "younger children seem to think it did not matter how much of McDonald's products they ate", it was "healthy and was good, because Ronald McDonald told them that was so".

Many of the adults Ms Gellatley had talked with had also mentioned the influence their children had in getting them to take them to what they termed "a junk food place like McDonald's", which advertising had succeeded in portraying as a "treat". "A lot of parents think their children eat too much junk food", she said.

**Sue Dibb**, employed by the National Food Alliance to research the effects of food advertising to children, gave expert evidence for the Defendants. To protect children's health, the NFA had called for a ban on advertising of sugary and fatty foods at times when large numbers of children were likely to be watching television. (Other countries, for example Norway and Sweden have severe restrictions on advertising to children and in some instances, outright bans.) In her view, "the cumulative effect of much food advertising does result in harm to children, in the sense that it encourages inappropriate nutritional practices which will have implications for children's health and their health in later life". She believed that in the debate over the future of food advertising "public health should be given priority" over the wishes of advertisers.

Children, described by one marketing company as an 'advertisers dream', were effectively encouraged to wield 'pester power' over their parents. In a recent survey nearly half of the parents of children aged over 5 said they often gave in to buying foods they would not otherwise buy as a result of that pester power. Almost two thirds of those questioned felt there should be tougher restrictions on advertising of food and soft drinks to children.

Ms Dibb had attended a seminar organised by and for those in the advertising industry entitled "Pester Power - how to reach kids in 1994", which discussed the most effective techniques for advertising to children. McDonald's, she said, use all such techniques in their ads - seeking to 'draw children into the McDonald's world'. Use of characters (such as Ronald McDonald) was a major trend in children's food and drink marketing and could be said to 'play on children's affection and loyalty' to those characters and 'exploit their emotions' (despite this being against the Independent Television Commission's (ITC) advertising code). Sections of McDonald's own operations manual, said Ms Dibb, "appeared to be a direct exhortation to managers to use children's emotions and particularly their love for Ronald McDonald to bring them into the store". Asked if she had concerns about this Ms Dibb said 'I do not think it is ethical'.

Ms Dibb criticised McDonald's 'misleading' attempts to associate its products with health, fitness and sport. She was also concerned about the "underlying promotional message" in McDonald's links with schools, dentists, etc, and in their increasing sponsorship activity, stating that whilst it appeared to be altruistic it was "advertising in a covert way".

### **DESTRUCTION OF RAINFORESTS**

The Rainforests section of the Trial is due to begin in July. However, during the Defendants opening speeches, internal company documents were read to the court in which McDonald's admitted the purchase in the UK in 1983 of beef imported from Brazil, a rainforest country - something which the company had always denied. When the Defendants attempted to question a witness from McDonald's about these documents, Mr Rampton QC made an objection claiming that the documents could not be used in court because they had been 'disclosed by mistake'. Two weeks later, after the witness had left court, just before there was to be a legal argument over this, Mr Rampton withdrew his objection!

**Mr Oakley**, Chief purchasing officer and Senior Vice President of McDonald's UK and Ireland said he was aware that the company had purchased Brazilian beef. He claimed it was for a relatively short period of time but said he was not sure how long exactly. He said that McDonald's claimed policy of not using beef which originated outside the EC Union was not brought in until "around the mid-80's -- maybe 1986".

A letter from the US Corporation to a member of the public in the UK in 1982 stated 'McDonald's has a long standing policy of buying all of our products from suppliers in the host country where we are doing business'.....'as a result we can assure you that the only Brazilian beef used by McDonald's is that purchased by the six stores located in Brazil itself'. Mr Oakley said he thought the letter was referring to the finished products (hamburgers), it was not "talking about raw ingredients". He denied that the purchase of Brazilian beef for use in the UK was in breach of McDonald's policy saying "No, it was not. We still bought the hamburgers locally. We did not buy the ingredients locally".

Despite objections by the corporation's highly-paid barrister, during the opening speeches an extract from the TV documentary 'Jungleburger' was shown, in which McDonald's beef suppliers in Costa Rica, stated that they also supplied beef for use by McDonald's in the USA. On top of this McDonald's had admitted that in Costa Rica their stores used beef reared on ex-rainforest land (deforested as recently as 10 years previously) contrary to their own propaganda.

### **EMPLOYEES AND TRADE UNIONS**

The Employment section of the Trial, probably the largest section, is due to begin in March, but last July, **Paul Preston, McDonald's UK President**, said he did not consider the current starting wage of £3.10 an hour for crew members to be low pay. However, when asked, he refused to reveal his own salary. When asked why the company couldn't pay higher wages to crew members out of the \$1 billion dollars profits it made last year, he claimed that "people are paid a wage for the job they do", even though he had earlier agreed that crew members worked hard and their job was more physically demanding than his own. When asked if the company could use its \$1 billion advertising budget to pay higher wages he stated that without advertising the company would have "no business".

A taster of the abundant evidence to come on McDonald's attitude to trade unions was provided by **Robert Beavers, Senior Vice-President of the corporation in the USA**. He agreed that in the early 70's, at a time when trade unions were trying to organise in McDonald's in the US, the company set up a "flying squad" of experienced managers who were despatched to a restaurant the same day that word came in of an attempt by workers to unionise it. Unions made no headway in the company.

**Paul Preston** said that if employees wanted to then "they should join" a trade union. However, in two incidents in London in the 1980's when staff had expressed an interest in joining trade unions, managers had called McDonald's UK head of 'Human Resources' to the stores to "talk" to the discontented staff.

### **PACKAGING, RECYCLING & WASTE**

**Paul Preston**, McDonald's UK President, asserted that styrofoam packaging is less environmentally damaging than using plates, knives and forks! He also said that if one million customers each bought a soft drink, he would not expect more than 150 cups to end up as litter. Photographs were then put to Mr Preston, which showed 27 pieces of McDonald's litter in one stretch of pavement alone (the company has over 550 stores in the UK and serves a million customers each day).



**Edward Oakley**, Chief purchasing officer and Senior Vice President of McDonald's UK, claimed that McDonald's have a consciousness of environmental considerations and referred to the company's 'environmental task force' and a corporate environmental policy. He stated he did not know when this policy was published, but had seen it 'on a wall' at their head office. He said the policy "had not had any direct effect on the purchasing department", but "it certainly did on the Communications [PR] department".

He denied that the company's so called "Environmental Initiatives", were in the main a propaganda exercise. However, one of the company's nationally available 'McFact' cards publicised a scheme to recycle polystyrene waste from Nottingham stores, where customers were asked to put polystyrene packaging into a separate bin, "for recycling into such things as plant pots, coat hangers and insulation material for use in homes, even fillings for duvets". Mr Oakley admitted that despite the scheme continuing for several years, the company did not recycle any of the waste and in fact the polystyrene was "dumped". (Note: Recent press reports from New Zealand indicate that a similar scheme was in operation there, which was also exposed as a sham).

Questioned about the environmental impact of paper versus polystyrene packaging Mr Oakley said it was six of one and half a dozen of the other. He said McDonald's preferred to use polystyrene because they could recycle it, but admitted that the only polystyrene being recycled was some of the packaging from a scheme involving five stores in Manchester (the company has over 550 stores in the UK). He claimed the company aimed to expand the scheme, but agreed that the company "had gone nowhere with that for the last two years or so".

#### **Dumping waste 'an environmental benefit'**

In some countries the company had abandoned or limited the use of polystyrene packaging, in part because it was not biodegradable and took up a lot of space in landfill sites. Mr Oakley stated that there was "no landfill problem in the UK". Questioned as to whether he believed that "as long as there is room in the dumps, there is no problem with dumping lots of McDonald's waste in the ground?" Mr Oakley said "and everybody else's waste, yes, that is true". He said "I can see [the dumping of waste] to be a benefit, otherwise you will end up with lots of vast, empty gravel pits all over the country." Asked if he was "asserting it is an environmental benefit to dump waste in landfill sites" he stated "It could be".... "yes, it is certainly not a problem".

Mr Oakley admitted that with the exception of the five Manchester stores all post-consumer waste in the UK either ends up as litter or gets dumped in landfill sites. He defended McDonald's use of large quantities of packaging, and said that the use of colourful cartons with company logos was "to put the brand across directly to the customer".... "for image, brand image".

**Robert Langert, Director of Environmental Affairs of the McDonald's Corporation, USA**, admitted that very little recycled paper was used in McDonald's packaging before 1990. He also accepted that CFCs (used in McDonald's polystyrene foam food packaging) were banned by the US Congress as an aerosol propellant in 1978, but he said that McDonald's was not aware of CFC/ozone depletion as an issue until the mid-80's. Following worldwide concern over CFCs, McDonald's had phased out use of CFCs and HCFCs. However, the 'Environmental Affairs' Manager of Perseco (the sole supplier of McDonald's packaging in over 60 countries), admitted that in 1989 these were still being used in 29 countries, and that even now HCFCs are used in the Philippines and Turkey.

**Professor Duxbury**, expert witness for McDonald's, agreed that CFCs & HCFCs caused damage to the ozone layer and that in 1988 McDonald's used "significant" quantities of these chemicals. He further said that McDonald's present UK blowing agent, pentane, contributes to smog formation and the greenhouse effect.

**Mr Oakley** admitted that when UK McDonald's introduced CFCs in their polystyrene packaging in 1986 they were aware of the ozone damage caused by CFCs in aerosols. Mr Oakley claimed the company was not aware of similar concerns over the use of CFCs in packaging until later that year. It then took until 1988 for McDonald's to cease using CFCs in this country. Press reports revealed that in 1987 Friends of the Earth had called for a boycott of McDonald's products over this issue, but Mr Oakley denied that this was a consideration in the decision to cease use of CFCs.

Defence expert witness from the USA, **Brian Lipsett**, explained how the 'McToxics' campaign galvanised thousands of protests and official bans and forced McDonald's to withdraw their polystyrene foam food packaging in the US. He identified the problems associated with styrofoam - toxic wastes, damage to the ozone layer and smog pollution; the leaching of styrene from the packaging into the foods packaged in the foam; and the serious disposal problems - the sheer volume of the material and the lack of a suitable method of disposal. McDonald's has continued to use styrofoam in many countries, including the UK.

**Professor Walker**, McDonald's toxicology expert, agreed that styrene can migrate from polystyrene packaging into food (especially fatty foods). He said that the International Agency for the Research on Cancer had classified styrene as possibly carcinogenic to humans. Also styrene can be metabolised in the body into styrene oxide, which he said appeared to be much more hazardous to human health.

## ANIMALS

The Trial is currently listening to evidence on this topic (until late February). **Edward Oakley** stated that he was also responsible for the Quality Assurance Department at McDonald's. As part of his remit he said he had a responsibility for animal welfare. He claimed that the company "had a very real feeling that animals should be kept and slaughtered in the most humane way possible" and so had published an animal welfare statement two years ago. When questioned about this so called policy Mr Oakley admitted that the "animal welfare policy is, in fact, just a policy to comply with the laws of the various countries in which McDonald's operate", and added "we do not go beyond what the law stipulates".

**Dr Neville Gregory**, McDonald's expert witness on the rearing and slaughter of animals, said that chickens used to make 'Chicken McNuggets' and 'McChicken sandwiches' were crammed into sheds, with less than the size of an A4 sheet of paper per bird and no access to daylight. 44% of the chickens had leg abnormalities and other health problems occurred. Chicks rejected by the company were dumped into dustbin-sized containers and gassed.

At age 6-7 weeks birds were transported to the slaughterhouse, where they were hung upside down before being electrically stunned in water. Up to 14% of the chickens received pre-stun shocks, which cause distress and can be painful. 1% of birds (around 1350 per day) were decapitated without being stunned, which Dr Gregory agreed could cause suffering. A further 1% were not dead on entering the scalding tank. He agreed that the *stunning and killing methods used did not comply with the governments Codes of Practice*, and might lead to distress and pain for the birds.

**Mr Oakley** claimed that the company "will not purchase from any supplier who does not conform to the Codes of Practice of this Country". He said that if it came to the company's attention that animals were not being properly stunned before being slaughtered "we would discontinue purchasing from the supplier".

**Dr Gregory** said McDonald's egg suppliers kept chickens in battery cages, 5 chickens to a cage with even less space per bird than the broiler chickens and with no freedom of movement and no access to fresh air or sunshine. **Mr Oakley** said McDonald's had thought about switching to free range eggs, but, not only were battery eggs "50% cheaper", but, he claimed "hens kept in batteries are better cared for". He said he thought battery cages were "pretty comfortable".

**Dr Gregory** related that at least 40% of piglets reared for McDonald's products were raised in indoor breeding units. All pigs had their teeth clipped and one in four had their tails docked. When they reached 40kg the pigs were transferred to fattening units, where for the last part of their lives there was only half a square metre of floor space per pig.

Dr Gregory stated that abattoirs supplying McDonald's beef supplier used mainly ex-dairy cows. He accepted that dairy cows were subjected to stress, pain, exhaustion, and disease due to being forced to be almost constantly pregnant and milked. When they became unproductive after only a few years they were sent to be slaughtered for McDonald's burgers. Electric goads were used to force the cows into stunning pens. Cattle were stunned with a captive bolt pistol to the head. Dr Gregory stated that "the accuracy of shooting was not particularly good". Half of the skulls examined showed an inaccurate aim. Imperfect stunning was estimated at 3.7%.

Dr Gregory said that suppliers in general felt that using more effective (higher) stunning currents would affect meat quality, and also that slower killing lines (allowing increased accuracy) would affect profits. He accepted that during inspections slaughter rates are often slowed down because "people are more careful about what they are doing when they are being scrutinised". (Helen & Dave have been unable to independently verify conditions as their expert witnesses have been *denied* access to the relevant establishments.)

## MOVING THE GOALPOSTS

After the destruction of McDonald's case on the links between diet and cancer (see "Kiss of Death" above), McDonald's applied and were given permission to amend their Statement of Claim (issued in September 1990) in this area, despite vigorous protests by the Defendants. The Statement of Claim is the basis of the action, so McDonald's have been able to move the goalposts after most of the evidence in this area has been heard. The Defendants may now have to prove the statement (not contained in the London Greenpeace Factsheet) that "McDonald's sell meals which cause cancer and heart disease in their customers". Helen and Dave may be forced to recall some witnesses to be cross-examined again. In addition to the issue of diet and cancer, McDonald's have changed their case on the Animals issue. They are no longer objecting to the terms 'torture' and 'murder' being used to describe the rearing and slaughter of animals to make McDonald's burgers, but have widened the issues in dispute in this area of the case.

Before the trial began, McDonald's did their utmost to avoid legal obligations to disclose relevant company documents and answer the Defendants' questions. This has been a continuing controversy during the trial with McDonald's suddenly producing new documents half way through their witnesses evidence, but also with numerous arguments to get further documents which the company does not want to disclose. An important document which, when disclosed, had been 95% blanked out by McDonald's QC, was finally obtained complete after nearly a year of effort, but not until after the relevant witnesses had given their evidence.

Campaign Statement: The McLibel Support Campaign was set up to generate solidarity and financial backing for the McLibel Defendants, who are not themselves responsible for Campaign publicity. The Campaign is also supportive of, but independent from, general, worldwide, grassroots anti-McDonald's activities and protests.



junk food? poor working conditions? damaging the environment? suppressing criticism and opposition? manipulating children through advertising? mass polluting? destroying forests? promoting unhealthy food as nutritious? exploiting workers? exploiting animals? exploiting the poor? lying? killing millions of animals? undermining communities? low pay? damaging the ozone layer? producing mountains of litter? pioneering oppressive business practices? homogenising cultures? anti trade unions? replacing self-sufficient farming with cash crops? bombarding the world with propaganda? abusing libel laws? causing animal suffering? mass use of dangerous chemicals? selling unhealthy food? contributing to global warming? stealing and squandering the world's resources? profits over people? profits over animals? profits over the environment? causing food poisoning? changing eating habits? supreme arrogance? pretending to be 'green'? using HCFCs? stealing indigenous people's land? contributing to heart disease & cancer?

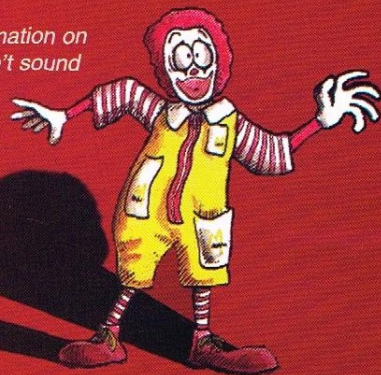
judge for yourself



- McDonald's, McLibel, Multinationals -

[www.mcspotlight.org](http://www.mcspotlight.org)

*"It is claimed to be 'the most comprehensive source of information on a multinational corporation ever assembled' - and that doesn't sound like an exaggeration." - The Guardian*



No Internet access? Contact: McLibel Support Campaign, c/o 5 Caledonian Rd, London N1 9DX, UK. Tel/ Fax: +44 (0)171 713 1269  
Want to get involved? World Day of Action Against McDonald's: October 16th, a store near you, every year.



# **BIG MAC & THE SMALL FRIES**

***Come along and hear  
DAN MILLS  
of the  
McLIBEL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN  
and take part in a  
DISCUSSION  
about how we can end exploitation  
of people, animals and the  
environment.  
— at the —  
CITY HALLS, CANDLERIGGS, GLASGOW  
7.30pm • WEDNESDAY 26th APRIL***

*Called by*

**THE SCOTTISH FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS  
& CAMPAIGN AGAINST McDONALDS**



slaughter' is a myth. We have the choice to eat meat or not, but the 750 million animals massacred for food in Britain each year have no choice at all.

**EXPLOITING THEIR STAFF**

Workers in the burger chains are paid low wages. McDonald's do not pay overtime rates even when employees work very long hours. Pressure to keep profits high and wage costs low results in understaffing, so staff have to work harder and faster and as a consequence accidents, particularly burns, are common. The majority of employees are people who have few job options and so are forced to accept this exploitation. Not surprisingly staff turnover at McDonald's is high, making it virtually impossible to unionise and fight for a better deal, which suits McDonald's who have always been opposed to Unions.

**CENSORSHIP and McLIBEL**

Criticism of McDonald's has come from a huge number of people and organisations over a wide number of issues. In the mid-eighties London Greenpeace drew together many of those strands of criticism and called for an **Annual World Day of Action against McDonald's**. This still takes place every year on **16th October**, with pickets and demonstrations all over the world.

McDonald's, who spend over one billion dollars every year on advertising and promotions, are trying to silence the world-wide campaign by threatening legal action against those who speak out. Many have been forced to back down because they lacked the money to fight a case. But this year, Helen Steel and Dave Morris, two supporters of London Greenpeace will defend themselves in a major High Court libel trial. No legal aid is available so the unwaged environmentalists are representing themselves. McDonald's have engaged in a huge **cover up**, refusing to disclose masses of relevant documents. Also, the defendants have been **denied their right to a jury**, after McDonald's argued that the issues in the case would be 'too complex' for members of the public to understand. Despite all the cards being stacked against them, Helen and Dave are determined to expose the truth about McDonald's. Protests against the \$24 billion a year fast food giant continue. It's vital to stand up to intimidation and to **defend free speech**.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO**

Together we can fight back against the institutions and the people in power who dominate our lives and our planet, and we can create a better society without exploitation. Talk to friends and family, neighbours and workmates about these issues. Please copy and circulate this leaflet as widely as you can.

**McLIBEL TRIAL**, open to the public, 10.30am most days, Court 35, High Ct, Strand, London - for details and days in Court: 0171-713 1269 .../... **LEAFLET your LOCAL McDONALD'S** - leaflets £12 per £1,000 from 0115 9585666. .../... **Protest against McDonald's packaging and litter** - join **OPERATION 'SEND-IT-BACK'** - 0115 9585666 .../... **McDONALD'S WORKERS SUPPORT GROUP**, c/o 10a Bradbury St, London N16 - 0171-249 8086 (24 hrs).

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Please send me more information	I enclose £_____ donation to the campaign
Name_____	Address_____

GLASGOW HERALD 24 FEB 97

**B**ETWEEN June 1994, and December 1996, in a London court, David slugged it out with Goliath. To be more precise, Dave Morris, an expostie, and Helen Steel, a part-time pub worker, traded legal arguments with top-flight lawyers representing the McDonald's Corporation of America and its UK subsidiary. Dave Morris - an unemployed lone parent facing the risk of damages and costs estimated at £10m - had little doubt about the "real" nature of what has become one of the longest trials in UK history.

A judge has retired to consider his verdict. Either Dave Morris and Helen Steel will have grossly defamed a perfectly innocent company going about its normal and lawful business - producing, worldwide, \$30bn worth of fast food in 104 countries - or they will, in their terms, have triumphantly exposed a multinational monster which symbolises "colonialism", unhealthy diets, and exploitation of children and families.

During a short speaking tour of Scotland this week, Morris was forthright and unrepentant about his backing for London Greenpeace - a small but long-standing group which, McDonald's alleges, produced and distributed in 1989/90, the now notorious *What's Wrong With McDonald's* fact sheet damning the company. He believes sincerely that if he and Ms Steel lose in strictly legal terms, they will nonetheless have won a political war.

Morris is convinced that the "McLibel" proceedings represent "the first time the inner workings of a multi-national corporation have been exposed to public scrutiny". While, with equal apparent conviction, his foe claims it behaves little differently from any other "mainstream" large commercial concern in the late-twentieth century - exhibiting genuine regard for environmental issues and paying staff the "going rate" - Morris holds that "two

# Standing up for what he believes

**Ian Sutherland** talks to Dave Morris - the man at the centre of the 'McLibel trial' - one of the longest in British legal history

worlds" have been publicly in collision. Whatever the formal verdict - expected by summer 1997 - he feels the echoes of the case will reverberate into the third millennium.

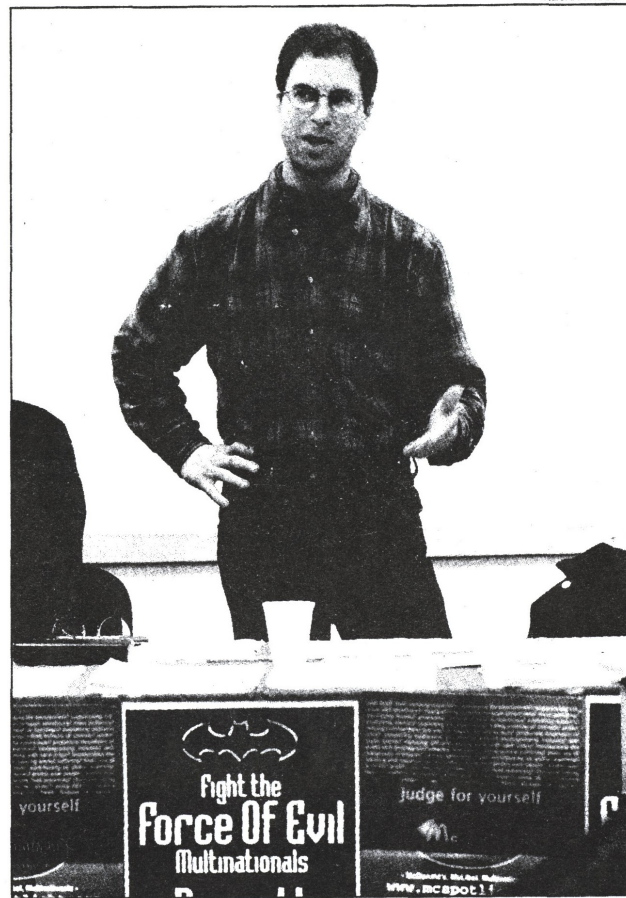
"We forced McDonald's to hand over previously confidential documents," says Morris. "By producing in our defence ex-McDonald's workers from 12 countries, we revealed global exploitation. And we believe we showed that multi-nationals' claims to respect the environment are just so-called 'greenwash'."

Morris also states unequivocally that he is an anarchist. But he regards the multi-nationals as the effective "revolutionaries". A man who thinks before he speaks, he treasures the apparent irony of describing himself as "old-fashioned on the issues that matter". In his view, he and Ms Steel are effectively irrelevant as individuals. Hundreds of thousands of "anti-McDonald's" leaflets have been distributed in the UK - before, during, and since the "McLibel" case began. Thousands of people could have been pursued by the angry company. It happened to be Morris and Steel.

Morris says he grew up in a

traditional London family, taught to care deeply about the welfare and education of children. In that sense, this stormy petrel of radical dissent regards himself as profoundly conservative - as dedicated as, for example, the present Government in his commitment to "family values". He says it is massively irresponsible to profit from selling hamburgers to children who demand such products via so-called "pester power", created by advertising he regards as "propaganda". During the "McLibel" hearing, McDonald's did not dispute the term "junk food". Effectively, McDonald's stated it sold "an experience". It simply wasn't in the "food" business in the full sense of the term.

**G**EORGE Orwell opined that the best revolutionaries are outraged conservatives. Morris could fit that bill. He denounces his opponent as "Stalinist". He admires US law - under which McDonald's would never have made it into court. In extremis, he could be a very traditional parent who wants children to "eat up their greens". In common with other tradition-



Picture: IAN HOSSACK

Talking revolution: Dave Morris gave an illustrated talk in Glasgow last week during a Scottish tour.

alists, he could be interpreted as believing that bad habits formed in childhood will negatively affect adulthood. Prima facie, his message seems to accord with that of official health authorities, who daily attempt to dissuade people from consuming products high in fats and salt.

Morris says he came to court via intensely "local" issues - traffic, schools, housing. Come summer, regardless of whether he and Ms Steel are judged guilty of defamation - or become victorious "village Hampdens" and "giant-killers" - Morris says he'll return to his north London backyard, one more concerned parent serving on a PTA. But he won't forget global issues. "My parents always said I'd grow out of it, but I'm actually growing into it."

Morris supported the miners' strike of 1984/85, organised claimants' unions in deprived areas, and campaigned against the poll tax. On those fronts, sections of traditionalist thought marched with determined revolutionaries. As pit closures hit in the 1990s, "Tory ladies" from Kensington carried the banner with Arthur Scargill. Both strands saw themselves as highlighting "traditional values". Morris understands that.

"There are good traditions and bad ones. I'm revolutionary in terms of the things that really need to be changed. But 'civi society' is in conflict with those in power. I don't think human society can co-exist with multi-national corporations. The world's decision-making should be localised. And in practice terms, I don't like bullies and that's what made me fight this case. The bigger the bully, the more important it is to stand up to them."

Perhaps inevitably, there is going to be a book on the "McLibel" trial. Apparently there's a delay on that though. Its publishers are having it very carefully checked for libel. And Dave Morris allows himself a wry grin at the irony of that, too.





## McLIBEL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN

c/o 5 Caledonian Road, London, N1 9DX, UK. Tel/Fax 0171 713 1269

For comprehensive information on the case and McDonald's (independent from MSC and the McLibel Two):

<http://www.mcspotlight.org/>

August 1996 Supporters Letter

Dear Friends,

The McLibel Trial began 25 months ago on June 28th 1994 and it's expected to continue into Winter 1996/7. In December 1995, it became the longest civil case in British history. For perhaps the first time in history, a multinational corporation has effectively been put on trial over its business practices - promotion of junk food, exploitation of workers and animals, advertising to children, and damage to the environment. The alternatives have also been successfully aired and defended. Despite the unfairness of the battle and the oppressive libel laws, and the Defendants' exhaustion, the general feeling of observers is that McDonald's critics have been completely vindicated by the evidence during the trial. The case is continuing to receive publicity worldwide, and the grassroots movement against McDonald's and other fast-food chains is growing in strength across the globe. Come along to our **McLibel Gathering** (see below) to hear the evidence obtained, and to mobilise for beyond the end of the trial.

### Coming Events - Autumn 1996

#### **McLIBEL GATHERING**

#### ***Mobilise Against Big Mac***

**Sunday 29th September 1996 - 10.30am to 8pm** - Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (nearest tube Holborn)  
Entrance FREE - Donations welcome. Wheelchair access (including toilets) except creche upstairs - help available

Discussions ♦ Workshops ♦ Adopt-a-Store ♦ Vegan Food ♦ Creche

A DAY FOR:

- a complete expose of the oppression, exploitation and environmental damage caused by McDonald's
- a discussion of the effect of the McLibel case and the evidence uncovered
- local, regional and national networking of anti-McDonald's campaigners

#### **DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH McDONALD'S WORKERS**

**Sat October 12th 1996**

This day marks the fourth anniversary of the death of Mark Hopkins, a worker electrocuted at McDonald's Manchester store. The *Support Network for McDonald's Workers* together with the *McLibel Support Campaign* are again calling a countrywide (and international) Day of Solidarity With McDonald's Workers on that day, following last year's successful event. WE CALL FOR LEAFLETING AT LOCAL STORES - leaflets available from McLibel Support Campaign, c/o 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX, Tel/Fax 0171 713 1269 (send donation).

**MANCHESTER** - picket of McDonald's store at 86 Market Street (organised by Mark Hopkins' parents), Noon to 1pm.

**LONDON** - picket of McDonald's at Leicester Square (opposite Swiss Centre), 5pm to 7pm.

#### **Annual WORLDWIDE DAY OF ACTION AGAINST McDONALD'S**

**Wed October 16th 1996**

Picket your local store (leaflets £15 per 1,000 from Veggies, 180 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3HW. Tel 0115 9585666 - for leafletting stores in Greater London, contact McLibel Support Campaign). And:  
4.30pm to 6.30pm **PICKET McDonald's Head Office**, East Finchley High Road, London N2 (opposite East Finchley tube).

**Putting The Corporation On Trial** - In the past year most of the evidence in the trial has been focussed on McDonald's employment practices; the environmental damage caused by cattle ranching; and publication of the *What's Wrong With McDonald's?* Factsheet (during June, five of the private investigators hired by McDonald's to infiltrate London Greenpeace gave evidence). 130 witnesses have given live evidence in court, 70 for McDonald's (including 18 executives/dept heads) and 60 for the Defence (mainly various experts and approx. 30 ex-employees and trade unionists from around the world). Dozens of other witnesses (mostly abroad) have testified in writing. All of the evidence has now been completed.

McDonald's witnesses have tended to be evasive but many have made admissions or ludicrous statements under questioning. The Defence case seems to have gone very well, although we have no illusions about a verdict based on a juryless trial and the UK libel laws. The parties will return to court in October 1996 (after the Summer recess) to present their closing speeches, lasting approximately 9 weeks in total. Why not come to Court 35 (Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2) and see for yourself? (Phone McLibel office to check when court is in session). The detailed Judgment is expected at the end of 1996 or early 1997. Whatever the verdict, the campaign will continue and we call for each and every McDonald's store to be leafletted on the Saturday afterwards (see 'Adopt-a-Store' leaflet).

#### **Message from Helen & Dave**

"It's very encouraging to us to hear of concern, protests and publicity around the world about the case and the campaign. McDonald's had hoped for a quick show-trial against their critics in order to use any verdict as propaganda worldwide. But the tables have been turned and it's McDonald's who are on trial - the truth behind their glossy image has been laid bare. This is a great opportunity for campaigners everywhere to raise all the issues about the company's business practices and to ask the public to judge for themselves."

**Worldwide Publicity** - This is an exhausting legal battle for Helen and Dave, but it's an excellent opportunity to step up the pressure and publicity against McDonald's at a time when the public are interested and concerned about the issues in the case. The trial is receiving publicity worldwide - for example, major articles, features, and interviews have recently appeared in the national media in Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, France, South Africa, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Japan, Trinidad, Russia, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Thailand, India, and Israel.

Although it's the Chicago-based McDonald's Corporation as well as McDonald's UK that's suing Helen & Dave, and despite the fact that there has been much evidence on McDonald's operations in North America, the Corporation is still trying to portray the case as "an English issue" (Walt Riker, Director of Public Affairs Communications, quoted in Oak Brook Press). This line to the media (trying to deny corporate responsibility for the embarrassing and damaging case) first surfaced in a confidential internal McDonald's memo in Australia last year: it stated, for example, "contain it as a UK issue", "keep it at arm's length - not become guilty by association", and in addition stated "we could worsen the controversy by adding our opinion". It is clear that now is the time for concerned activists to speak out and campaign - while McDonald's are on the defensive.

**Support Spreads** - A wide range of organisations and groups - green, civil liberties, trades union, socialist, anarchist, animal rights etc. - have agreed to back the campaign. McDonald's brought the case against Helen & Dave in an attempt to silence their critics, but it has completely backfired for the company. But we mustn't underestimate the power of McDonald's to swamp the country and the media abroad with advertising and propaganda for the rest of the trial and afterwards. For this reason, it's essential TO CONTINUE TO CIRCULATE AND DISTRIBUTE THE "What's Wrong With McDonald's" LEAFLETS WHATEVER THE VERDICT AT THE END OF THE TRIAL (£15 per 1,000 from 0115 9585666). Over 1½ million have been handed out in the UK alone since the writs were served and thousands of people have pledged to continue circulating the leaflets whatever the verdict. Protests and campaigns against McDonald's continue in over 24 countries. You can help by getting the leaflet into group mailouts, conferences, marches and meetings - as well as direct to the public on the streets. Every word in the available anti-McDonald's leaflet is true. The 12th Worldwide Anti-McDonald's Day is coming up (October 16th) - please picket your local store.

In the UK, we are calling on people to pledge to leaflet outside their local store at the end of the trial and on all future days of action (see "Adopt-a-Store" leaflet enclosed).

#### **'McSpotlight' World-Wide Web site**

**<http://www.mcspotlight.org/>**

Another nail in the coffin of McDonald's global censorship strategy

McSpotlight is an internet-based library which makes available across the globe everything that McDonald's don't want the public to know. It contains 2,500 files (45 megabytes) of anti-McDonald's information and campaigning news from over 20 countries. It has been accessed nearly 3 million times since its launch in February 1996.

Please note: the McLibel Support Campaign is supportive of, but independent from, McSpotlight which is a project of the McInformation Network based in 14 countries.

**McLibel Listserver** There is an internet service which distributes the latest McLibel information to anyone's e-mail address. To subscribe, send the e-mail message "subscribe mclibel" to **[majordomo@world.std.com](mailto:majordomo@world.std.com)**

Also please get involved with the independently organised initiatives below: **Support Network for McDonald's Workers** - a network providing advice and encouraging solidarity among their workers - c/o MSC, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX. **Operation 'Send-It-Back'** - to collect and send back company litter to their HQ or in protests at local stores - c/o 180 Mansfield Rd, Nottingham NG1 3HW (Tel. 0115 9585666). A network for **Kids Against McDonald's** - all kids everywhere are encouraged to set up their own local KAM groups - c/o MSC, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX.

We must not tolerate the truth being silenced by censorship or legal thuggery. In the face of mass defiance, McDonald's will be helpless and their efforts will have totally backfired! Other corporations will then get the message not to follow in their footsteps, and it will be a victory for all movements for justice.

Best wishes from all of us. In solidarity,  
McLibel Support Campaign



## London Journal

## Britain's Big 'McLibel Trial' (It's McEndless, Too)

By SARAH LYALL

LONDON, Nov. 28 — Even after two grueling, often grindingly tedious years, the case popularly known as the McLibel trial is very much a study in extremes. On one side of an ancient London courtroom sits Richard Rampton, a bewigged libel lawyer for McDonald's Corporation, ubiquitous purveyor of McNuggets, McRibbs and McChicken sandwiches. On the other side sit two dressed-down vegetarians: Dave Morris, an unemployed postman, and Helen Steel, a part-time bartender.

On Nov. 1, the case, in which McDonald's is suing Ms. Steel and Mr. Morris for libel, reached its 292d day and achieved the dubious distinction of becoming the longest trial in British history. It is important not only for McDonald's, which says it is fighting for its reputation, but also for a loose international network of self-proclaimed libertarians, union organizers, vegetarians, environmentalists and animal rights campaigners who have seen the enemy and decided that it is McDonald's itself.

The trouble began in the 1980's, when Mr. Morris and Ms. Steel were sometime members of London Greenpeace, a group that describes itself as an informal, non-hierarchical collective of people who campaign for a range of social issues (it is separate from the international Greenpeace movement).

In 1989 and 1990, the group distributed a pamphlet, "What's Wrong With McDonald's," which accused McDonald's of, among other things, promoting poor nutrition, exploiting children through advertising, encouraging litter, mistreating animals and workers, and destroying rain forests.

Unamused, McDonald's sued Ms. Steel, Mr. Morris and three other members of London Greenpeace for libel. The three others apologized and promised never to do it again. But Mr. Morris, now 42, and Ms. Steel, 31, vowed to fight back in court.

"We didn't feel we had a choice," Ms. Steel said. "What was there to apologize for? It's McDonald's who should be apologizing to the public for the damage they cause to society and the environment."

Mike Love, the head of communications for McDonald's U.K., said the company did not have a choice, either. "Going to court was very much a last resort," he said. "The purpose

## What's wrong with McDonald's?



Everything they don't want you to know.

An illustration from the brochure behind the "McLibel" suit. After accusing McDonald's of a host of misdeeds against humanity and the environment, David Morris and Helen Steel, right, were sued for libel.

of this trial is to protect the company's reputation."

For the defendants, McLibel has been an uphill battle. Because they cannot afford lawyers, they are representing themselves. Because immediate transcripts of the trial cost about \$560 a day, they wait three weeks until the price drops to \$32. And since they spend all their free time reading McLibel-related documents, they have to hold strategy meetings in the subway, as they travel to and from the courthouse.

So far, the case has generated 40,000 pages of documents, 30,000 pages of transcripts and headaches for everyone concerned, including the judge, who spends much of his time explaining the fine points of law to the defendants. The defendants, too, are wearing out.

"It's like day and night working on the case, more or less," Ms. Steel said. "We haven't had a lot of time for anything else."

Under Britain's strict libel laws, the burden is on the defendants to establish that their allegedly libelous statements are true. In this case, Mr. Morris and Ms. Steel are faced with the daunting task of proving every far-reaching charge in the original



Jonathan Player for The New York Times

anti-McDonald's pamphlet. The effort has resulted in a parade of some 180 witnesses testifying on everything from the effects of used coffee cups on landfills to whether a Big Mac, fries and a shake constitute a nutritious meal.

McDonald's has countered all their claims, bringing in its top executives to testify to the company's integrity and responsibility. Meanwhile, the McLibel Two, as they are called, have become folk heroes to thousands of people around the world who are following the case on the Internet, where a much-expanded version of the pamphlet that McDonald's objected to in the first place is circulating.

"McDonald's is an icon for people who are campaigning against corporations who put profits above anything else," said Jessie Graham, a spokeswoman for McSpotlight, an anti-McDonald's web site that she says has been accessed four million times since February.

The Internet campaign has volunteers in 25 countries, including, in Craftsbury, Vt., a 50-year-old piano repairman named David Briars who says he wants to "oppose a-human entities that are obviously ruining

our world."

"There are a lot of people who sit around vegetating in front of the television set who love McDonald's and think it's part of American life," said Mr. Briars, who maintains a large anti-McDonald's electronic mailing list and has himself become a vegetarian since the trial began. "But some people are starting to think, 'Maybe they have a little too much influence on our children.'"

The trial is creaking on. In court this week, Ms. Steel and Mr. Morris are in the fifth week of summing up their defense. McDonald's lawyers will follow, and then the presiding judge, who ruled early on that the facts would be too complicated for a jury to follow, will make the final decision.

Legal experts, even those sympathetic to the anti-McDonald's position, say that things don't look too promising for the McLibel Two. However, the defendants are holding firm.

"We feel we've already won, because McDonald's whole purpose in bringing this case was to try to intimidate its critics into silence," Ms. Steel said, "and they haven't done that."



# **McWorld On Trial:**

## ***Confronting the Multinationals***



Dave Morris and Helen Steel were sued for libel over a factsheet entitled **What's Wrong With McDonalds**. The result has been Britain's longest civil case as two unwaged environmental activists were engaged in an epic struggle against the £30 billion McDonalds Corporation.

The trial concluded in December 1996  
and a decision is imminent.

Dave will present a talk and video about the experience.  
Come and judge for yourself!

**Thursday 20th February 1997 at 7.00pm,  
Renfield St. Stephen's Church Centre,  
260 Bath Street, Glasgow G2.**



turn on  
and  
tune in



**PART 1**  
**Sat 17 May**  
**7.15pm**

**PART 2**  
**Sun 18 May**  
**7.30pm**

set  
your  
video

There is not much on television that makes staring at box worthwhile, but the epic reconstruction of what happened in Court 35 during the McLibel trial may be an exception. The tale spans two nights and more than three hours of television. 'McLibel!' is produced by Dennis Woolf, who has specialised in the detailed reconstruction of court cases and other hearings. He was a major contributor to last year's award-winning Scott of the Arms Antics, about the Scott report into arms for Iraq, recreating key moments of that lengthy inquiry.

**Full details on McSpotlight**  
**<http://www.mcspotlight.org/>**

WORKING





# LONDON

## TRANSNATIONALS INFORMATION CENTRE

### taking on transnationals...

**Transnational corporations** — TNC's or multinationals — are giant companies with global operations. They touch everyone's lives. They make anything from toothpaste to televisions, dominating services from banking to cleaning.

**Seeking monopoly power**, they buy out small firms, **shedding products and jobs**.

The directors and shareholders are **not accountable** for the actions of their company. Least of all to employees or consumers, who have **no access to information** or a democratic say in decisions that have a great effect on their lives.

Dwarfing government power, TNC's can **move money, technology, information and work** quickly around the world. **Decision-making is centralised** in the board-room. Often the "local firm" is only revealed to be a TNC subsidiary when it is being closed down.

In the Third World, TNC's frequently locate hazardous production banned in Europe. They exploit resources for their profits. They promote their own products pushing out local producers and trade. TNC's encourage poor and dangerous working conditions in the Third World which would be outlawed at home.

### did you know that:

- ▶ One in every two manufacturing workers in Britain works for a TNC.
- ▶ Over half of public service cleaning contracts in Britain are held by just two TNC's.
- ▶ The combined sales of the world's top 200 TNC's is equivalent to one-third of the world's gross domestic product.
- ▶ Pesticides produced by TNC's but banned in the West are used widely in the Third World, causing one accident every 2 minutes, or 6,700 deaths a year.

### and if you think you ought to know more

**Transnationals Information Centre London** researches and writes about TNC's with the aim of making the information available and accessible to those who need to know.

- ▶ TICL provides information on TNCs' local, national and global operations, or can help you find out, and makes international links.
- ▶ TICL has worked with migrant groups, local authorities, trades unionists, solidarity and third world campaigns, environment groups and community organisations.
- ▶ A consultancy is available for trades unions and local authorities.



# 1. McDonald's: From Local Store to Transnational

The rise of Big Mac is one of the all-time success stories of US corporate history. In 1955 milkshake-machine salesman Ray Kroc took out a franchise on a hamburger store owned by two McDonald brothers. Today McDonald's is the largest fast food operator in the world.

Thanks to its 560,000 employees, last year the corporation made \$1.32 million profit a day. The chain has grown by one new outlet every 17 hours for the last decade, with earnings growth of 15% a quarter until last year. Its golden arches span 45 countries with 9,410 outlets serving 19 million people every day. "And we will continue to dream," says the corporation, "to pursue opportunity wherever it leads us . . . the sky's the limit. And even that may not be true."

## Property Tycoon

McDonald's is the world's largest owner of retail property. In 1986 their property was worth \$4.88 billion on the books – the market value is even greater. Rentals bring in a staggering 90% of profits from the franchised outlets on which its phenomenal growth has been built. McDonald's is a property company which sells hamburgers.

## Starship Enterprise

The US forms the bedrock of the McDonald's empire, with 7,272 outlets compared to 2,138 abroad. It controls 20% of the hamburger market – more than Burger King and Wendy's combined. Over 7% of all Americans get their first job under a McDonald's cap. But its influence on the economy goes beyond the outlets: it is the biggest meat purchaser and accounts for 5% of Coca Cola's total sales.

Industry analysts have long predicted a glut in the US market. Growth is down to 1% pa from 3% in 1983 and competition intensifying. However McDonald's chairman Fred Turner dismisses any suggestion of saturation: "It's just not a problem. For the foreseeable future, McDonald's can clearly grow at a satisfactory rate. Will it be 10, 12, 14% a year? I expect it will be in that range." To maintain that growth the corporation is introducing a steady stream of new products and looking beyond its traditional sites. But the key to McDonald's future lies overseas.

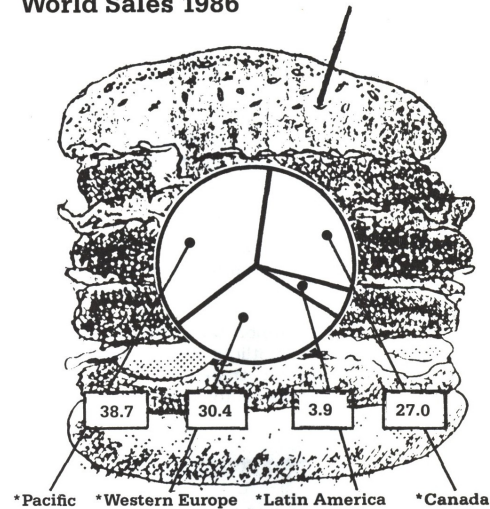
## Flying the McFlag Overseas

McDonald's landed in Canada and Puerto Rico in 1967. Today 23% of their outlets are outside the US. The corporation plans to make it 50% by the year 2000 with international sales outstripping the American total.

Penetrating an average of 5 new countries a year the Big Mac is becoming as ubiquitous as Coca Cola. Their most recent coups were in Yugoslavia and Hungary where joint ventures begin this year. Even the Soviet Union which once branded McDonald's as an "exploiter of child labour" is now willing to embrace the Big Mac.

Asia is the fastest growing market with 100 openings a year. But expansion will continue to focus on the countries which make up the bulk of its overseas sales – Japan (573 outlets), Canada (515), West Germany (245), the UK (231) and Australia (183).

## World Sales 1986



Per cent of sales outside of the US by geographic region

Transplanting the corporation's formula abroad is fraught with difficulties. Gaining government approval and winning over foreign consumers demand massive investment and lobbying – it took McDonald's several attempts to break into Australia. But the biggest problem is replicating its stringent control over supplies and distribution. In Thailand it's busy persuading farmers to grow the special Idaho Russet potato required for all its French fries.

The payoff is slow. In some countries profits can be 10 years in coming. Industry analysts estimate that in 1986 profits averaged 19% of international sales as against 26% in the US. But profits improve once the high start-up costs are spread over more outlets, as in the Big Five today. "We view our investment in international operations as long-term," says the corporation. "Consistent and steady increases in profitability has confirmed that this expectation is both realistic and achievable."

## Setting up Shop

To maximise profits and minimise the high risks, the corporation operates through a combination of franchising, joint ventures and company-ownership.

Franchising accounts for 75% of outlets and was the vehicle of US growth. By using franchisees' money as down-payments, and borrowing the rest, McDonald's amassed its property without spending a dime. The corporation, which takes 11.5% or more of sales, has adopted this approach in Japan, Canada, Latin America, West Germany and Australia. Affiliates (where McDonald's has less than 50% equity) and joint ventures are the order of the day in Asia, while the UK chain is almost completely company owned. The strategy in each country is determined by local considerations – which can demand a mix of company and franchised outlets, as in Canada.



## PUBLICATIONS

Recent TICL publications are:

- **The Other GEC Report.** Investigation into the largest electronics employer in Britain and a major arms contractor. 1986 ..... £1.00
- **News from TICL**, quarterly newsletter bringing news on TNCs – local, international, resources, reviews.  
SUBS groups and institutions ..... £10 p.a. Individuals ..... £5 p.a.
- **Beyond the Pail.** Report on migrant workers and TNCs in the European cleaning industry. 1986 ..... £1.00
- **The Bhopal Papers.** Report of a Conference held in November 1985 on the Bhopal massacre including other commissioned papers ..... £2.50

## AFFILIATIONS

TICL has an affiliation scheme for individuals and organisations. Affiliation costs £5 a year for individuals. Group affiliations £10. Overseas affiliates please add £2 for postage.

### Affiliates receive

- \* **News from TICL** – a quarterly newsletter on TNCs.
- \* **Special Reports** – produced regularly
- \* **Access** to our resources on transnationals
- \* **Help** in researching a TNC which concerns you

I/We wish to affiliate to TICL ..... Want to know more about TICL .....

Wish to order the following publications .....

.....

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Name .....

Address .....

.....

Organisation/special interests .....

.....

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Please fill in this form and return it to: **Transnationals Information Centre**, 9 Poland Street, London W1V 2DG. Telephone: 01-734 5902 or 01-434 9962.

# TRANSNATIONALS INFORMATION CENTRE

9 POLAND STREET, LONDON W1V 3DG. TELEPHONE 01 734 5902

April 1988

Dear Friend

We are writing to inform you about the legal action being taken against us by the fast food company, McDonalds over our report WORKING FOR BIG MAC. This report was the result of careful research and first hand experience. However, McDonalds has issued a Writ for damages against us, alleging that the information on working conditions and employment practice injures its character, credit and reputation. Shortly after the Writ was served, McDonalds' solicitors wrote to one of TICL's employees threatening her personally with an action for slander and a claim for 'punitive damages' if she referred to the report at a recent national conference on food - even though only part of the report is cited by McDonalds in their Writ.

We are concerned at the attempts by McDonalds to limit discussion on employment practice, wages and conditions. Such discussion is of increasing relevance with the expansion of casualised and part-time work in all industries. We are concerned that actions like this will inhibit other research into McDonalds' operations.

We intend to defend this action fully. However, the financial consequences are daunting. Transnationals Information Centre London (TICL) is a non-profit making organisation, funded largely by grants and work undertaken for trades unions, community groups or local authorities and by affiliations. The case has already cost £2,000 and the total could exceed £40,000, depending on how far McDonalds pursue the matter.

We have established a fighting fund, and are writing to ask your support in defending the action. We would be grateful if you could make a donation, organise a collection on our behalf amongst your friends or at your workplace, organise a fund-raising activity or publicise the case in any way. We would be happy to send additional information about the case to supporters. Overleaf we reproduce a recent article in Private Eye.

Donations received in excess of our legal fees and costs in preparing the case will be used to finance further research into working conditions and low pay in the fast food industry. We hope you are able to support us.

Best Wishes

Transnationals Information Centre London

.....

Donation to TICL's McDonalds Fighting Fund                      Amount £ .....

Name .....

Address .....

Please make cheques payable to TICL MCDONALDS FIGHTING FUND. For those outside the UK, please send sterling cheques as it costs £10 to convert foreign cheques into sterling.



# Big Mac News

**I**N September last year Transnationals Information Centre, a modestly financed watchdog group, published a report entitled *Working for Big Mac*. While less than fulsome in its praise, the report merely went where many others have gone before. In January, the McDonald's UK subsidiary replied with a libel writ – an event perhaps not entirely unconnected with the fact that they had already sued the *Guardian* which published a resume of the report. An 18-page Statement of Claim lists the litany of libels of which these community-conscious corporate do-gooders complain. These relate almost entirely to the low wage policies used by McDonald's, which is an anti-union employer of, primarily, teenagers – many from ethnic or immigrant backgrounds.

As if this were not impressive enough to cow TIC into silence, when Ronald McDonald's legal crew Barlow Lyde & Gilbert heard that TIC's Barbara Dinham was to address a conference at the Southbank Polytechnic on 20 February they immediately rushed round a warning letter threatening that any unkind word about those oh so friendly fast food people underneath the golden arches would be taken as slander and used in evidence at the trial in order to claim punitive damages. Result – a silenced Dinham.

Such behaviour from a multi-national – revenues £4 billion-plus – based in the land of free speech and home of the First Amendment against a tiny organisation which has to appeal for funds to defend itself, might strike the outside observer as somewhat excessive. It would be totally unfounded to suggest that this power-play by Big Mac may have anything

to do with seeking a grovelling settlement which would undermine the *Guardian* position.

While complaining about paragraph after paragraph, McDonald's leaves some highly damaging statements seemingly uncontested. Quotes from McDonald's managers such as: "There's pressure on everything – labour costs, food, soaps – to make as much profit as possible" or "Labour is the big one we hear about from head office", or even "You have to keep labour costs down" surprisingly do not find their way into the McWrit. Nor does the quote from a happy female employee paid a princely £1.74 an hour: "How can we survive?"

However, there are some curious inclusions in the McWrit, including a complaint about a Steve Bell cartoon of a worker chained to a hamburger. Clearly there's no sense of humour back in Chicago. Or, repeating a previously unchallenged *Guardian* report of January 1986 that the Soviet Union had once held founder Ray Kroc – now gone to hamburger heaven – to be "an exploiter of child labour" and so denied McDonald's the Moscow Olympics contract. Or that it complains of quotations from an Education Welfare Officer (who successfully had this model employer prosecuted for hiring a 16-year-old schoolboy), a former GLC official and the TGWU Women's Officer, but has taken no action against the authors.

But then other omissions are less surprising. Such McFacts as that the company was ordered in 1973 to stop using lie detectors when it hired staff; that the chief personnel officer in West Germany sent out a 1979 circular advising managers not to hire anyone who was a union member; and that two years ago McDonald's was fined in Spain for refusing to hold union elections. All this from a company that complains about the quotation from one of its own managers: "The company is totally anti-union."

Private Eye,  
Friday 18 March 1988

"I was desperate for some money and there wasn't much else going", said Clare, a 17-year-old who worked in the Brighton McDonald's. "I was getting £1.58 an hour, I worked 40 hours a week and was rang up on my rest day to go in. It was awful work. But there's nothing at all for 17-year-olds. I don't know how the government expects you to make out."

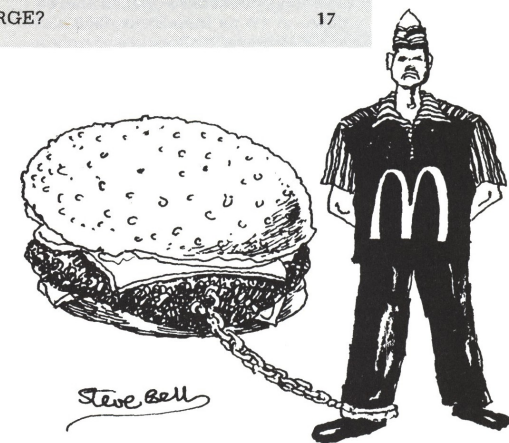
When were you last in McDonald's? You may relish a milkshake and Big Mac, despise it as junk food or be dragged in by your kids. Love or hate McDonald's you'll have noticed the young faces at work. But have you ever wondered why they're running between the burgers and fries? What the stars pinned to their uniforms mean? How often it's a new face cleaning up your empty cartons and ketchup?

In the minute it takes you to read this page 13,000 people around the world will have eaten in McDonald's. That phenomenal success has been built on the backs of people like Clare.

This report takes you behind the counter in search of their recipe for success. The spotlight is on McDonald's employment practices and what they mean for workers, trade unions and local councils against the backdrop of the growing service sector in Britain today.

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In Paris, McDonald's cancelled its franchise agreement after winning a court case. According to the Daily Telegraph (2.9.81) the Paris franchise was licensed to pay royalties at only 1% of gross sales, while takings were twice the average rate of overseas trade. And in the UK, where McDonald's started with a joint venture, it later bought out its partners.

A tight rein is kept on all foreign operations. The corporate ethos and management system are rigidly imposed, detailed operating manuals followed to the letter and an extensive field organisation checks on each store to enforce standards. All foreign operators attend Hamburger Universities and international sessions with other members of "McDonald's Family".

### Refuelling the McEngine

Corporate strategy hinges on other policies born in the US and shipped around the world:

★ "Today our concept of real estate knows no limitations", said their 1985 Annual Report. "There is not a corner we will not explore." McDonald's is expanding beyond its traditional suburban sites into higher cost, higher volume sites. It's chasing contracts in lucrative semi-captive sites – in museums, airports, parks, hospitals, even Japanese apartment buildings. In 1983 the US company stunned its competitors by offering double their bids to install 10 McStops on State tollways. It isn't hard to fathom out why: sales at such locations are a third more than average. McDonald's is also talking with other corporations about opening up in their canteens.

**The all-American transnational is joining forces with Uncle Sam. Arch rival Burger King beat them to a contract for Army and Air Force installations and since 1984 has moved into the UK bases. But McDonald's has captured 300 US Navy and 3 Marine bases at home and abroad. By 1986, 44 had opened in countries including Bermuda, Puerto Rico and Cuba. Although costs are greater, turnover can be twice the average \$1.3m of other outlets.**

Prospects in Britain must be inviting as public services are privatised and company canteens turned over to outside contractors. And although it lost the prestige site at Gatwick Airport to Burger King and Trust House Forte muscled into British Rail, it's there to welcome you to Frankfurt Airport.

★ The relentless drive to maximise sales at existing outlets is central to maintaining McDonald's growth and competitive edge. In 1986, 35% of total capital expenditure, on \$333m, was reinvested in existing outlets. And this is exclusive of the millions of dollars spent by franchisees and affiliates.

Reinvestment concentrates on introducing state-of-the-art technology to reduce cooking times and on interior remodelling. The current trend is to create a "more inviting ambience for adults" as in the slick revamped Oxford Street store. Not that the corporation is abandoning its most important customers: more children's Playlands are also being dreamt up.

★ New products are constantly introduced to pull in customers without biting into burger sales. Recent appetisers include the Egg McMuffin and the McDLT sandwich – "The Hot Stays Hot, The Cool Stays Cool" – which British palates are putting to the test. Other treats in store for us are the pocket size McPizza and a Chicken McSwiss.

### Recipe for Success

McDonald's revolutionised the fast food industry. What Ford did for the motor car and manufacturing, McDonald's did for the hamburger and catering. They introduced a new production process: standardised products, technology which eliminates skill, and flexible labour practices were integrated into a competitive strategy with universal application. The corporation attributes its success to the cherished motto: Quality, Service, Cleanliness and Value. But Control, Planning, Productivity, not to mention strict Labour Control, would be nearer the truth.



Photo: Percy/Lamb

From London to Singapore the assembly line produces identical Big Macs. Standardisation and higher productivity are ensured through new technology and the systematic planning of each job, broken down into the smallest of steps. The corporation emulated the scientific management of manufacturing industry. For their new Series 80 outlets: "The company's industrial engineers measuring in seconds of time, used computerised time-study methodology to plan the equipment layout and work scheduling." Their aim: "to take the guesswork out of food preparation, applying sophisticated procedures that geometrically increase productivity."

Workers' skills are eliminated. They perform routinised tasks learnt in a day: to prepare and bag French fries workers follow 19 carefully calculated steps. This deskilling leaves McDonald's free to pursue a cheap labour policy which keeps costs down and enables it to hire and fire workers as demand fluctuates.

The corporation transformed fast food into a hi-tech industry which combines automation with flexibility. They invented the world's first French fry computer and a solid-state timing device which buzzes when burgers need turning. "New devices are coming in all the time", said one British store manager. The latest "clam-shell" grill which cooks burgers on both sides at once, slashes cooking time from 130 to 40 seconds.



Tight central control is at the heart of McDonald's production process. Computerised tills record sales by item: every time a burger is sold it calculates how many are left in stock and how much money the store has taken. The terminals report back to Head Office. On any given day corporate HQ outside Chicago can tell you the demand for chicken McNuggets in Guam or Filé-O-Fish in Alaska. Hamburgerologists then analyse the results at Hamburger University 15 miles away.

Central control extends to their suppliers. McDonald's imposes exact specifications on everything from plastic straws to the 13.33% sugar content in the buns and with the help of computerised stock-taking, minimum stocks are kept in the valuable high street stores.

In these ways McDonald's pioneered a unique combination of the old American mass production of deskilled assembly lines with the new Japanese flexibility of both production and the workforce and control over supplies.

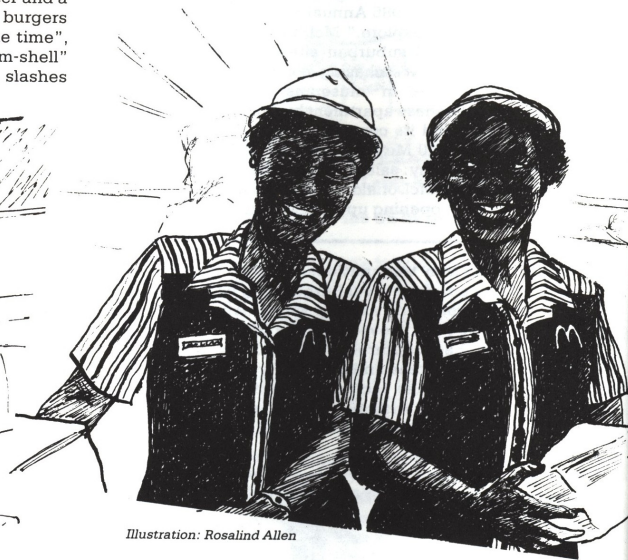


Illustration: Rosalind Allen

## Saturation Bombing

The revolution in fast food production has dramatically transformed our eating and drinking habits. Instead of meeting individual customer's desires, McDonald's awesome advertising machine creates international demand for its identical products. One twentieth of the cost of a hamburger is spent on persuading us to buy it.

McDonald's spends more on advertising a single brand than any other organisation. In 1986 a colossal \$789m, or 6.3% of systemwide sales, went on advertising. It is one of the five largest television advertisers in the US, with children its prime targets. After Santa Claus, the corporation's key prop Ronald McDonald is the figure best known to US children.

Saatchi & Saatchi once ran McDonald's UK publicity. Between 1982-84 advertising expenditure doubled to £6.4m, more than all the other major chains combined. "Advertising is like the arms race", says Burger King's Chairman. "Once you start there's no way to stop".

## McDonald's is only McDonald's

Fred Turner says McDonald's will keep looking for new markets and new ways to expand its basic business. The corporation has no plans to diversify despite offers, including one from Walt Disney Productions. As Turner has said: "We can maintain a growth rate in the teens throughout this decade ... it makes the question of diversification beside the point."



McDonald's is only McDonald's, giving it an edge over its competitors who are part of massive conglomerates. The top executives, insists Turner, are "psychologically committed" to burgers and fries. They uphold Kroc's motto: "I believe in God, family and McDonald's - and in the office that order is reversed."



## 2. Britain under the Golden Arches

In 1974 McDonald's opened its first UK restaurant in Woolwich. Over 1,000 Americans flew in to be greeted by the Mayor. Despite the razmataz and the offer of free meals, customers were nowhere to be seen – the day's takings totalled just £39.41. After 231 openings the picture couldn't be more different; in 1985 the computer reading showed a turnover of £149.7m. Few could have foreseen their spectacular rise and the high street revolution that was to sweep Britain's fast food industry. Today the companies are battling it out for the British people's hearts and palates.

### Battle for the Market

The fast food industry is booming. Worth £1.6 billion a year it has grown by 150% since 1972. Fish and chips are still the people's choice, with a third of the market. The 9,000 mainly independent operators (chippies, Indian and Chinese) still account for 60% of the take-away market but are rapidly losing out to the new-style multinational chains.

### Spot Who owns Who in the High Street?



Illustration: Richard Beard

### High Street Manoeuvres

Competition for a chunk of this profitable market has intensified with even the large chains under pressure. Mega-partnerships and takeovers of companies unable to stand the pace are the order of the day. And the casualties have increased in the scramble for prime London sites: United Biscuits took over Garner's Steak House to make room for Pizzaland.

The British market has assumed greater importance to the multinational chains as growth in the US slows down. But the stakes are high with returns on substantial investments some time in coming. By November 1986 McDonald's had laid out £230m and only just moved into the black. The same year Wendy's sold their 16 loss-making outlets to Whitbread who are converting them into their Pizza Hut and Quick chains. Danny Lynch of

**Fast food chains are making a "scandalous" profit on chips, according to the Budget Good Food Guide, 1987. The smallest portion they found was 3 ounces at McDonald's in the Strand.**

The shift was accelerated by the 1984 imposition of VAT on hot take-aways which had a selective impact on the industry. Worst hit were the traditional fish and chip owners, who have 82% of their sales as take-aways and cater to more price sensitive consumers. But the large chains the likes of McDonald's and Pizzaland escaped unharmed. Much of their sales being eaten on the premises (67% for burgers and up to 80% for some pizza outlets), they were already charging VAT.

Since the 1970s and the new era of American-style fast food, the transnationals have forged ahead. McDonald's leads the pack, meeting an expansion programme of 30 outlets per year since 1982. Its main competitor Wimpy, bought by United Biscuits from Lyons in 1976, has the most outlets; in 1986 its trading profits climbed by 19% to £5.1m. The pizza chains have also tasted success and are expanding even faster than the burger houses. Pizza Hut UK quadrupled its sales between 1982-84 and plans to open 250 outlets in the next 5 years.

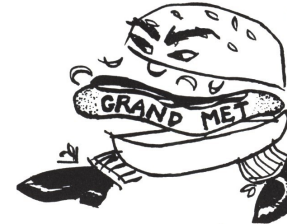
Answers to Who Owns Who in the High Street:  
United Biscuits: Wimpy, Pizzaland, Perfect Pizza, Trust House Forte, Little Chef, BSM, Spud-U-Like  
Kentucky Fried Chicken: Whitbread/PepsiCo: Pizza Hut, Whitbread/CB Inno: Quick, TGI Friday, Wendy's, TGI Friday  
Beefeater Steak House: British Rail: Casey Jones BSM: Spud-U-Like  
Score extra points if you knew companies not in the picture.

Wendy International explained: "There is growth in the UK market, but it is all about critical mass, that is, sufficient outlets to become more cost-effective. For us to do that in the UK would cost a considerable amount."

BURGER  
EATS  
BURGER

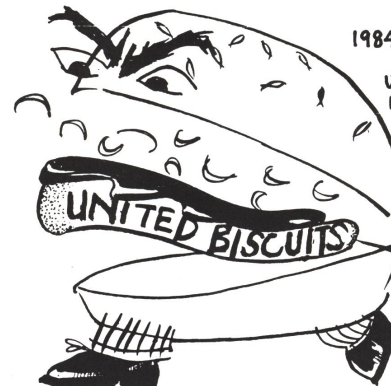


HAS 5  
LOSS-MAKING  
OUTLETS



1981

ADDS THEM TO THEIR  
HUCKLETTY CHAIN  
ON FRANCHISE FROM  
BURGER KING



1984

UNITED BISCUITS  
BUYS  
HUCKLETTY'S  
IN ORDER  
TO STRENGTHEN  
WIMPY'S  
PRESENCE  
IN LONDON  
AND THE  
SOUTH EAST

Illustration: Clare Smith

As a way into the market, the big US foodservice operators are signing master franchise deals with their UK counterparts to develop chains in partnership. Whitbread operates Pizza Hut in the UK under franchise from PepsiCo. The combination of muscle, local knowledge and an established chain identity enables them to achieve the rapid expansion which has become imperative.

In 1986 PepsiCo took over Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) from Nabisco for £570m. Analysts are confident that PepsiCo will revive KFC's flagging fortunes. Even before completion of the deal, negotiations began with Trust House Forte (THF) for management of the 356 British outlets. THF, who now own 50% of the British KFC, had been looking for a way into high street catering, having already established a monopoly on A-roads with both the Little Chef and the Happy Eater. Acquired in 1986, the Happy Eater had changed hands 3 times in as many months, a fate symptomatic of the industry today.

## The Big Mac Revolution

"We take the business of making hamburgers", say McDonald's, "more seriously than anyone else." Hamburger University in Finchley where managers study hamburgerology may sound far-fetched but behind the hype is a hard-nosed professionalism. As one former Burger King executive said: "Is the service quick? The fastest. Are the restaurants clean? Immaculate. You have to give McDonald's credit for knowing exactly what they're doing." Even with half the outlets of Wimpy, McDonald's 1985 turnover was £47m higher.

A McDonald's store manager explained: "The other big chains just can't handle the turnover of McDonald's. A colleague of mine went to work for one of our competitors and he couldn't believe how easy it was! At McDonald's everything is very tight. Waste is counted every 2 hours, yields such as number of milk-shakes from each packet are worked out weekly, and control over labour costs is extremely tight." Another London manager agreed: "There's pressure on everything - labour costs, food, soaps - to make as much profit as possible."

Its British competitors are still reeling. Forced into rethinking their strategy, they are now seeking to reproduce the McDonald's recipe for success. Wimpy have launched a major campaign to upgrade their customer appeal and hopes that: "The poor image which bedevilled Wimpy has been laid to rest." They are busy replacing their old-style table service with counter-service outlets which, still only a quarter of all their units, already take 50% of their sales. Likewise KFC, whose takings have fallen on its take-away stores in secondary locations, is moving into high street outlets with seating and a revamped image. Both companies are ruthlessly weeding out their less profitable franchisees.

## Company Control versus Franchising

In the US McDonald's depended on franchisees to achieve rapid expansion at minimum cost. But its UK outlets are company-owned. Although McDonald's promised franchised outlets for years, the first 2 opened only in 1986.

According to Wimpy who, like KFC, grew through franchising: "There has been a growing tendency over the past five years for corporate organisations to invest in the system." Company ownership guarantees total control and as Whitbread's Planning Director said: "If you can do the development alone, you can take all the profits. As long as we can develop alone and have access to sites we will do it that way, but we might consider franchising for geographical areas that are difficult to penetrate."

McDonald's first two franchisees in Hayes, Middlesex and Kingsbury, North London will be carefully monitored. "Franchising has not come to UK in a big way" said one store manager, "because company stores make so much money. I expect they'll eventually sell off the quieter company-owned stores." McDonald's claim to be franchising 5 more restaurants out of the 35 openings planned for 1987.

A McDonald's UK franchise agreement runs for 20 years. Their control remains total, from selecting and owning the site to supplying all the goods. The franchisee invests £250-350,000 depending on the store's size and location, pays a £10-12,000 joining fee, and a percentage of sales in annual royalties. "The prospects are good" said one manager. "One in 4 US franchisees is a millionaire!"



# Building the Arches

McDonald's move into Britain was initially cautious. Bob Rhea, a former US franchisee, established a UK associate – McDonald's Golden Arches Restaurants Ltd. He held the majority equity together with his finance director, an investor with real estate experience. McDonald's stake was 45%. When the agreement came up for renewal in 1983 the profitability of over 100 restaurants had been proven. McDonald's bought full ownership and registered the now wholly-owned subsidiary as McDonald's Hamburgers Ltd.

In its early days, McDonald's imported some equipment and food supplies from the US. But this increased costs and left them vulnerable: during a dockers' strike in the early '70s they had to airlift frozen French fries from


Canada. "We became master importers," said Rhea. "We decided we were going to duplicate the McDonald's system as it existed in the US or die trying."

The problem was finding suppliers able or willing to meet their standards. At that time the British food industry had little faith in fast food – one major meat manufacturer turned McDonald's down. Yet today McDonald's is Britain's largest beef purchaser. Buns also proved difficult, with two consecutive suppliers failing to meet its quality specifications.

Setting up their own suppliers became imperative. In 1978 they registered McKey Food Service Ltd to provide burgers. McDonald's owns 72%, in a joint venture with Keyston Foods, a branch of British Northern Foods. The company claims the Milton Keynes plant is the most advanced in Europe.

SUPPLIERS

Golden West Foods	Buns, ketchup, syrup, milkshake mix Boundary Way, 3 Cherrytrees Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire McDonald's subsidiary Employs 235 and a further 50 drivers, 40 warehouse people and 10 on vehicle maintenance
McKey Foods	Burgers Northfield Drive, Northfield, Milton Keynes MK15 0DF McDonald's subsidiary
McCain Foods GB Ltd	Chips Havers Hill, Scarborough, North Yorkshire
Sun Valley Chickens	Chicken McNuggets Hereford Cargill subsidiary Employs 2,500; TGWU union membership
Icelandic Freezing Plants Ltd	Fish South Humberside Industrial Estate, Grimsby
Beswicks Ltd	Big Mac and Tartar sauce Littleborough, Lancashire
Autobar Vendakeke Ltd	Cups Wylds Road, Bridgwater, Somerset
F. Bender Ltd	Napkins Vale Road, Finsbury Park, London N4
Clifford's Dairy Products	Milk (for London and the South) Western Road, Bracknell, Berkshire Drivers in TGWU
Develey GnbH	Pickle D-8025 Unterhaching Munchen, West Germany
Sweetheart International	Ronald McDonald cups and straws Holland



McDonald's

The DHSS puts the poverty line at £41.40 for a single person without dependents. In 1985 some 60% of all women and 33% of men in hotel and catering fell below this level. And these figures exclude the hundreds of thousands of part-time women and youths who earn even less.

The Council of Europe's "decency threshold" stands at £125 a week. To earn that you would have to be guaranteed 39 hours a week at £3.25 an hour – a position few McDonald's workers are ever in. And wages look set to fall still further as Tory deregulation takes hold.

The Unlicensed Place of Refreshment Wages Council regulates fast food chains. The Councils were established at the beginning of the century to combat low pay and poor working conditions in order to prevent the better employer being undercut by the unscrupulous. Since 1945 the Wages Council has specified legal minimum rates of pay for key sectors of hotel and catering, set at levels the least efficient can afford. McDonald's has always paid exactly the legal minimum wage set by the Council.



It is difficult for the Wages Council to effectively monitor the conditions of millions of part-time and temporary unionised workers. Under the Wages Act, employers are legally required to pay an overtime rate of £3.15 per hour if any employee over 21 works more than 39 hours a week.

At McDonald's, in theory and on the schedule no-one works over 39 hours: the heavy reliance on part-timers is precisely to avoid paying overtime. But in practice the pressure on meeting targets and last minute scheduling means that regulations break down.

"You shouldn't schedule people for more than 39 hours," explained a store manager. "But crew members definitely work more. There's a woman who for the last month has been doing 12pm–12am, 6 days a week, including Sunday and she'll still get phoned up on her day off to come in, but that'll be up to her. She's doing 70 hours and for the extra 21 or 31 hours she'll get the normal rate. It happens everywhere in McDonald's that people are scheduled for more than 39 hours."

The enforcement of the Wages Council's rates has been undermined by a lack of resources. Since 1979 the number of Wages Inspectors, never high, has been slashed – there are now 71 inspectors to cover 2.25m workers' pay in over 375,000 establishments. The Low Pay Unit's latest report *The Underpaid Millions* notes that last year only 2 firms were prosecuted out of over 8,200 found to be breaking the law over pay.

Meanwhile the government has increased to 3,000 the number of social security fraud inspectors. "The poor now know," say the Low Pay Unit/GMBATU in *Waiting for Change?*, "that the law will be used against them if they are unemployed but it will not be used to protect them when they are in work."

## Attacking Workers' Wages

However weak, the Council offered some protection; with the 1986 Wages Act that little is now lost. Given that McDonald's pays exactly the legal minimum, wages may deteriorate further as the full force of the Act makes itself felt.

It's on the cards that the government will completely scrap the Wages Councils, which they claim have priced people out of jobs. The Wages Act empowers the government to abolish individual councils by Ministerial Order without any public debate in Parliament.

The government claims the measures will create employment. A more likely scenario is the exploitation of young and part-time workers undermining the position of adult, full-time workers. Today the vast majority of McDonald's workers fall outside the scope of any employment protection because they are either temporary or part-time or under 21. McDonald's is virulently, and successfully, anti-union. So with no union and no rights, at a time of mass unemployment, the workers are more vulnerable than ever.

### A Manager's View

McDonald's promotes from within, encouraging crew members to work their way up. One store manager describes his job:

"I started work on the shop floor with no intentions of going into management." Today he is an assistant store manager. "As far as I can see McDonald's says it is an equal opportunities employer and I think it really is. No-one has ever held my colour against me. It's really excellent experience. For crew and for managers, the constant pressure is good if you can take it.

"Yesterday morning I started work at 7.00, went home at 2.00, came back at midnight to do a stock take and I've been here ever since – now it's 1.30 in the afternoon. I'm falling asleep. I've been doing 75–80 hours a week, and the salary's for 40 hours.

"For the hours the pay is awful which is one reason why so many managers leave. A trainee manager gets £6,500 plus £1,000 London weighting and an assistant store manager gets £10,500. You get rises once a year which used to be 10% but now it's on your performance – which depends on how the store does.

"The constant pressure from head office is awful. You have to keep labour costs down so in a quiet store managers tie themselves to the stations and run around like the crew. Why this constant pressure to make as much profit as possible when they're losing more managers than anything else? You talk to other managers on courses and out of 15, chances are 5 will be on the verge of leaving."



In 1976 Golden West Foods was set up in Hemel Hempstead to supply buns, muffins, ketchup, syrup and milkshake mix. Still expanding it is already the UK's largest producer of hamburger buns making 2m weekly and supplying McDonald's in Europe. In 1985 it too became a subsidiary when McDonald's increased its ownership from 45% to 60%.

Golden West undertake McDonald's deliveries. Other suppliers off-load at a central depot from where Golden West lorries dispatch to all stores. As the company expands north, a new distribution unit is to open in Rochdale. While its rivals depend on a number of suppliers and none of them have their own central distribution network, the McDonald's system guarantees total control over quality, costs and labour.

According to management a further 6,000 secondary businesses supply the company with everything from lettuce to window cleaners. Chips come from McCain Foods GB Ltd in Scarborough who prior to coming to the UK serviced McDonald's abroad. Pickles prepared to an exact thickness and diameter come from Develey, a German firm which supplies McDonald's in 4 other European countries, and a Dutch firm, Sweetheart International, provides the Ronald McDonald cups and straws. Cheese and apple pies, on the other hand, are exported from the UK.

## Buying up Britain

In 1985 McDonald's land and buildings in this country were valued at £160.2 million. As it expands, a lucrative property base is accumulating fast. Significantly, in 1984 a separate property company was formed to which all its property and equipment was transferred.

Little more is known. As a subsidiary wholly-owned by the US corporation, it does not have to publish annual UK reports. Accounts are available but the latest information is for 1985, and the company would not divulge more.

In 1985 they owned £67.3m worth of freehold sites – always McDonald's first choice, failing which they'll settle for leases of at least 20 years. Finding suitable sites is problematic as average high street restaurants don't meet their minimum needs of 4,000 sq ft. Smaller supermarkets are ideal, although the change of use applications invariably run into local opposition (see Chapter 7). Larger sites are split into several units and sublet. The London Wood Green outlet is on a 25 year lease from Tescos and former Woolworths are attractive sites.

We can only speculate on the income earned from property. But renting out space in their buildings, especially in central London, must pay massive dividends.



Photo: Percy/Lamb

## Driving in the fast lane

London forms the hub of McDonald's network. Their advance began in prime or near prime sites within the Greater London TV area – an indication of the key role accorded to TV advertising in overcoming initial consumer scepticism. By March 1981, they had invested some £35m in developing 53 Greater London sites. Today their London chain totals over 90, of which 15 are in the West End and the City, and management still sees: "substantial scope for expansion, especially with drive-thrus."

They then gradually penetrated the south east, motored up the M1 to the Birmingham area, and then across the M6 to Blackpool and the North West. Next on route is the

North East, first stop Gateshead's Metro Centre – and it's a short drive across the border into Scotland. Expanding at a rate of 30–35 outlets a year the company says: "Our long-term aim is to have a McDonald's restaurant in every community in the UK large enough to support one."

These geographical shifts run through the whole industry. The race is also on for free-standing outlets and drive-thrus catering to the "car-borne customer". The current trend in retailing towards large edge-of-town shopping complexes has been a fortuitous development for fast-food chains: prime sites are coming onto the market as the supermarkets move out of the high street, while the new complexes provide a lucrative semi-captive market.

### 3. Working for Big Mac

Photo: The Press Association, Ltd.



BigMac for Mrs T.

#### The Hamburger Economy

McDonald's directly employs 19,000 people in the UK. Since 1983 the workforce has increased by 61%, with 4,000 people coming onto the company's payroll last year alone. Today it is one of the biggest employers in London having over 7,000 employees, with seasonal variations. And it intends to continue expanding as fast in the future.

The fast food industry is one of the few growth areas of the economy. Mrs Thatcher has presided over the decline of Britain's manufacturing base, mass unemployment and the rise of a new economic saviour – the service industries. Jobs in tourism are now three times the number in the car industry. Jobs in hotel and catering – including fast food – account for 5% of all employment and are touted by YTS as the hope for the young unemployed.

More than ever before, the labour market has been divided into a dwindling permanent workforce and a growing reserve of part-time, casual and temporary workers. One in 4 workers are part-time, and of those, 90% are women. Nurtured by the Tories' attack on workers' rights and cheap labour policies, flexible work is becoming the fast food of more and more employers.

Amongst the benefactors are the multinational fast food chains. Despite their unprecedented advances in recent years, the wages and conditions of their workers are among the worst in the country.

#### Labour Costs

McDonald's aims to keep labour costs within 15% of any outlet's sales. "It's very tight", said one store manager. "If sales are down, labour costs must come down: you have to cut the staff and make those remaining work harder."

"Labour is the big one we hear about from head office", another manager explained. "A really high volume store could run at 10% labour because the bodies are always in motion. But in a quiet store you still have to keep a foundation crew which is why labour slips up occasionally to 16-16½%. The pressure to keep labour costs down means having less bodies in the store, so we're running around all day, all night. Otherwise labour would be right through the ceiling."

To stick to the 15% rule, high productivity is extracted from a "flexible" workforce of part-time and temporary workers, mostly youth, blacks and women. They work unsocial hours with no security for low pay.

#### Young, Female, Exploited and Black

McDonald's depends on young workers to keep its labour costs down. Some 32% of the workforce are under 18, many still at school, and 75% under 21. Hiring an under-18 year old saves McDonald's 52p an hour. And with the government's abolition of wage protection for workers under 21 those savings could increase. "We're under pressure from head office", said one store manager, "to hire as many under 18 year olds as possible and we worry more about them leaving. Even if we give 20p an hour extra to keep them on, we cut costs."

McDonald's recruits from other groups discriminated against in the labour market. It feeds on foreign visitors, women, students and ethnic minorities who, with few other opportunities, are forced to accept the poor wages and conditions.

McDonald's has no specific figures available but in hotel and catering as a whole people from ethnic minorities are twice as likely to be employed as white workers. "We don't look at people's colour or nationality", said one manager, "but their availability."

**With teenagers hard to find in suburban USA, McDonald's is going all out to recruit senior citizens. TV ads encourage them to sign up under the McMasters programme. Some 10% of the workforce are now over 50 and 5% over 60. The company believes they are no more demanding than young people and more efficient.**

#### Part-timers Wanted

A new McDonald's opened in Holborn central London on Christmas Eve last year. Unable to predict volumes, management took on large numbers of Italian students, whom they soon "got rid of". Now they have "settled down" to 120 crew and 8 managers, all under 26 years. There are only 35 full-timers. But as one manager said: "We don't have full and part-timers here. Everyone at McDonald's works flexible hours."





Photo: Percy/Lamb

Although an average store has 80 people on its payroll, 80% of McDonald's staff are part-time. The company says an average crew member works 25 hours a week. But many work more.

Those who work less than 16 hours are outside the protection of most employment legislation. Until they clock up 5 years' service they have no rights to redundancy or maternity pay, time off for trade union activities, or to claim for unfair dismissal (except for union membership). Britain is one of the only European countries to limit the legal rights of part-timers.

**The Liquor Trades Union in Australia has received complaints that workers are dismissed when nearing their 20th birthdays to avoid paying adult wages. Youngsters scheduled when business was slack had to fold boxes: they were not paid for this. It's hardly surprising McDonald's reported difficulties in getting Australian workers to smile!**

Shifts last 6-8 hours any time between 7am and 2.30 the next morning. Stores serving breakfast have staff round the clock, cleaning through the night for the 6.30 opening. Every 6 hours workers have one 45 minute break - unpaid - but they often have to remind managers to let them off.

Only a skeleton staff is scheduled for each shift as a matter of deliberate policy to keep costs within the 15% ceiling. "We are always under-staffed".

Nobody has set times and managers draw up the rota each week. "We schedule" said one, "for our needs not theirs." Workers can state their preferences, but much depends on whether you're in with management. Unfavoured workers might not get the hours or better paying shifts they want. This "flexibility" also makes it difficult for those claiming the State benefits needed to supplement their low income, as they cannot say in advance the hours they work.

By employing part-time workers, many of whom effectively work full-time, the stores can cover unsocial hours without paying overtime and can adjust workers' hours on a weekly or even daily basis as sales and staff numbers fluctuate.

McDonald's Crew Handbook spells it out: "Your hours of work cannot be permanently guaranteed because the number of staff we can employ depends on how busy the restaurant is. Sometimes it is necessary to increase or reduce the number of hours you work to take these fluctuations into account."

**Julie works in an outer London store: "Yesterday I was meant to go home at midnight, after working 8 hours. But they were short-staffed and asked me to clean up until 2.30am. I didn't want to but there was nothing I could do. Same thing happened night before. Lots of us are working 12 hours sometimes without proper breaks. One woman has done 86 hours over her scheduled time in the past 3 weeks! John hasn't had a day off for months - they keep ringing him up on his rest day - and a bloke who refused to come in one Saturday was reported to head office."**

## Throw-away Jobs

"Flexibility" amounts to an absence of job security. Workers taken on for seasonal peaks are laid off when the pace slackens.

This explains McDonald's lack of concern about its high staff turnover. Within a month, 7 out of 10 starters drop out - you're a veteran if you last 4 months. In London this means a staff turnover approximating 200-250% a year and every single store permanently advertises vacancies. According to a local manager: "No-one ever stays more than 6-9 months unless they want to go into management. It's the pressure, heavy hours, awful pay and it's a degrading job - having to clean tables and scrub floors in front of all the customers - and always having to smile. People get really fed up."

A senior personnel manager said: "I wouldn't say we have a very high turnover of staff. Some turnover is in the nature of the business and it's not a problem for us." There is a constant pool of unemployed to draw upon and the unskilled jobs are soon learnt. Indeed high turnover offers positive advantages: flexibility is maintained, workers kept on the lowest rates with few rights and the door firmly shut against unions.

### Attacking Workers' Rights

McDonald's policies epitomise the "flexible workforce" strategies employers are pursuing to reduce labour costs and union strength. In the cold language of employers, it means maintaining a "core" of permanent workers supplemented by a "periphery" of part-time and temporary workers. A spate of Tory legislation is removing all protection from the 8 million workers (one third of the employed) in the periphery.

Every fast food worker will lose out under some section of the latest White paper *Building Businesses not Barriers*. This includes proposals to:

- ★ Raise to 20 hours a week the definition of full-time work which gives entitlement to main employment rights.
- ★ Extend from 6 to 13 weeks the disqualification period for unemployment benefit if people leave their jobs voluntarily or are sacked for misconduct.

Women are directly under attack. Nine out of ten part-timers are women and since 1979 the number working less than 16 hours a week has risen by 50%.

**THOUSANDS OF YOUNG WORKERS EARN UNDER £1 AN HOUR**

**FIGHT POVERTY PAY WITH USDAW**

*Join Usdaw's Campaign and Fight Poverty Pay!*

President  
Syd Tierney

General Secretary  
D. Garfield Davies



**UNION OF SHOP DISTRIBUTIVE AND ALLIED WORKERS**  
188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ

## 4. On the Breadline

### Lean Pay, Fat Profits

Fast food workers are among the worst paid in the country. Marina, a 17 year old working in a McDonald's outside London, earns £1.58 an hour – the price of a 100 second sale. Founder Ray Kroc was said to have amassed a personal fortune of £571 million.

Area	Age	7am–7pm	7pm–11pm	11pm–7am
Outside	Under 18	1.58	1.77	1.96
London	18+	2.10	2.35	2.60
London outer circle – within M25	Under 18	1.62	1.82	2.01
	18+	2.17	2.43	2.69
London inner circle – 15 busy West End stores	Under 18	1.76	1.97	2.18
	18+	2.33	2.61	2.89

Workers are assessed for gold stars and 5–15 pence pay rises three times a year. Mike had just passed the 3 week probationary period when the manager left: "The new one didn't like me and said I'd failed so I had to do another 3 week trial. My mate Orrin has worked 9 months and still not got a star because he's too mouthy to the managers." And if the store is doing badly, pay rises can be put off.

Few stay long enough to get all 5 stars. Laxmi got her first star after 3 weeks. The next rise 6 months later brought her pay to £1.74. That's equivalent to £69.60 before tax for a 40 hour week, and she doesn't even get those hours. "How can we survive?"

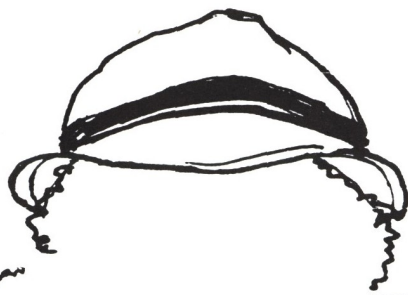
### Poverty Pay

One in ten of all Britain's low paid workers are in hotel and catering. They are at the bottom of the pay league along with agricultural workers, cleaners, hairdressers and shop assistants. In London, 80% of low-paid workers are women and 75% of women working part-time earn less than the poverty threshold.

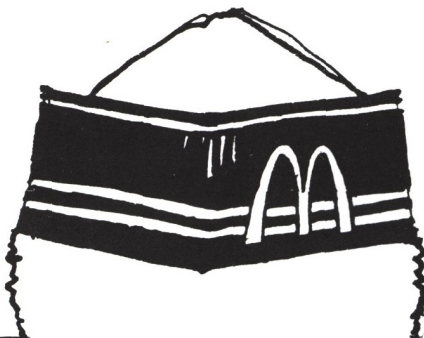
The average adult wage in Britain today is £160 for a 40-hour week. A senior personnel officer at McDonald's said that 70% of the general staff work part-time. That makes it difficult to calculate the average pay packet. But assuming Marina works a 30 hour week, she'll get £47.40 before tax. Sheila is 25 and works in London, 7pm–11pm, 6 days a week. She gets £58.32.



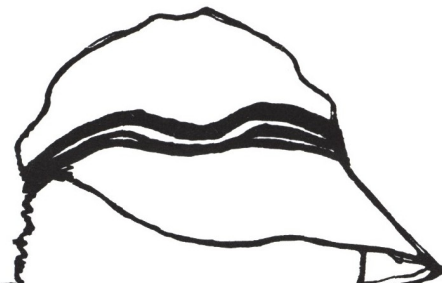
# What The 1986 Wages Act Means



Marina, 17 years old



Kevin, 19 years old



Sheila, 25 years old

Marina and Kevin, like all workers under 21, are no longer protected by the Wages Council. They have no legal rights to a minimum wage or holiday pay.

McDonald's can now effectively pay any rate they like.

In Sheffield, Wimpy recently had 400 applicants for 40 vacancies. In such circumstances relying on the "market rate" may mean a dramatic fall in wages. The Low Pay Unit estimates that young people face cuts of 40-50%.

The process has already begun with the June 1987 pay review. Rates for workers over 18 rose by 11p. But rates for workers under 18 rose by 8p.

Britain is now the only industrialised country, and one of the few in the world, without minimum wage protection for young workers.

### How McDonald's might adjust:

Kevin has a lot to lose. Like all those aged 18-21, currently 45% of McDonald's workforce, he is paid a higher rate than those under 18. But over the next few years his wages may fall to the "market rate" for 16 year olds.

In June 1987 Sheila along with *all workers* lost legal rights to

- \* Extra pay for shifts, unsocial hours, Sundays and rest days
- \* London weighting
- \* Holiday pay

Sheila and all workers over 21 are only entitled to two rates set by the Wages Council:

- \* A single basic rate - £2.10
- \* A single rate for every hour worked over 39 hours - £3.15

### How McDonald's might adjust:

- \* The cancelling of higher rates for the evening shifts, 7pm-7am
- \* The narrowing of differentials between London and the rest of the country. The premium for the 15 inner London stores will probably remain because of recruitment problems.

## 5. On the Burgerline

"12 Big Macs down." I push bun bases in the toaster, right? "Dress these regulars please." I'm squirtin ketchup when the toaster start bleepin buns are done. "Where's the regulars? Speed up!" The guy on grill is givin me grief cos meat is burnin and the main man is bawlin at him. Me legs are jelly, me throat dry and me head's explodin' under this stupid cap. Why's this cheese on crooked? Give me Big Mac bases now." Outta onion, I run to the freezer. "What's goin on? You're too slow." I'm pissed off with the man shoutin orders from the counter an' hate the guy cookin untold burgers. "Six quarters down." I put frozen burgers on the grill an burn me hand. "Why all this mess? Clean it up." As I start wipin trays, the timer flashes meat needs turnin, the toaster's buzzin and someone's yellin at me to fill up the pickle. I want to swear at the other crew that I can't do everythin at once but I just slap crowns on the finished burgers shoutin: "12 Big Macs up." An all this in 160 seconds!

### Hi-tech with No-tech jobs

McDonald's pioneered the process of rationalising production and introducing hi-tech which has transformed catering into an unskilled job. They combined the standardised mass production of the assembly line with a flexible response to momentary fluctuations in demand. For the multinational chains the system spelt higher productivity and lower wage bills. For workers it spelt a deterioration in the quality of their jobs.

Catering once depended on the trained chef and apprentices. In McDonald's those skills have been replaced by computerised technology, standardised products and the precise planning of each subdivided task. There is no room for creative chefs in this factory – workers from Ealing to Outer Mongolia perform exactly the same repetitive tasks to prepare the same Big Mac.

McDonald's eliminated all demarcations and any career structure based on training and skills. The chef, assistant chef, waitress, cleaner have been levelled down to the uniformed crew member. Everyone at McDonald's cleans, goes on till, on grill, on fries, on lobby. This enables the corporation to follow the "flexible workforce" strategy on which its profits rest.

### Kitchen Control

"Sometimes I think if you cut a McDonald's employee he would bleed ketchup." Paul Preston President UK (FT 26.6.85).

Control over the workforce and their productivity is achieved in a number of ways. Managerial supervision is increasingly exercised by the technology itself, with innovations to increase the workers' speed constantly being installed. Computerised machinery regulates the pace of work at each station to the precise second.

Control is also exerted by the pressure of customers on the skeleton staff. Customers were timed entering the Birmingham McDonald's at the rate of one every 10



Photo: Percy/Lamb

seconds between 1.00–1.30pm; and each customer should be served within 180 seconds. When custom drops, the number of workers and not the workload is reduced.

The forced pace puts intense pressure on both managers and workers. In the heat of the moment tempers become frayed and each worker blames the other for holding up the conveyor belt.

The corporation has fabricated an elaborate system of hierarchies and individual incentives which keeps the workers smiling at the customers but at each others' throats. Everyone is assigned to a team of workers at different levels. For your first 3 weeks you're a green badge; then progress to a yellow badge and compete for the gold stars awarded for fry, grill, cleanliness, service and personal. Performance is reviewed every 2 months and pay every 4, stars bringing financial rewards. If you win all five stars you wear a white shirt, before joining the white badges in line for management. You finally take off your tag when you become a store manager.

Workers in each grade are accountable to those above and control the workers below, chasing them to meet production targets. Otherwise they may not get their stars and pay rises at the next review.

The constant spot checks by higher grade employees increase competitiveness and the diligence with which workers harass their subordinates. "It's always everyone for themselves," said one worker. "You get a feeling no-one trusts each other – in case they go to the manager. Whether you get your stars, or selected for training school or management, doesn't always depend on merit but whether you're pally with management."

For all the talk of teamwork, McDonald's promotes a cult of individuality. "Some people wait for the future" they state. "Some people push it along. We don't have waiters." Pinned on the store's noticeboard is a list of crew who "did



exceptionally well last week." Down in the crew room another notice advertises "Crew of the Month" competition with a £10 prize – more than some workers earn in a day. In their break, workers can flick through McNews and read how winners of the Swedish "Best of the Best" competition were awarded a trip to London. The highlight was a tour of the breakfast shift in Marble Arch.

Further control is exercised and dissatisfaction diffused through periodic "rap sessions". Central management

meet with workers to discuss their complaints, particularly against store managers. In one store, workers were hoping to bring up the overtime question but expected the meeting to be on an unpopular manager. McDonald's insists these sessions make unions unnecessary.

## 6. Unions Versus McDonald's

### Shutting out the Unions

**"It's the 150,000 kids out there that make us tick. If the unions succeed at McDonald's then my job has failed."** Jim Kuhn, McDonald's chief management consultant, speaking about the USA. But it applies equally to the 560,000 employees around the world.

McDonald's is internationally notorious for its anti-union policy. Although in some countries unions have wrested rights from the corporation, in Britain McDonald's is proud to say it knows of no union members in its stores or its own suppliers. Anyone trying to unionise is quickly shown the door.

"The company is totally anti-union", said one manager. "If you want to start a union, they'll hear about it and sack you. None of the managers belong to unions either. Not a single one!"

### Crusade against "Non-conformists"

**"We cannot trust some people who are non-conformists . . . We will make conformists of them in a hurry."** Kroc's words were no empty boardroom threat.

*San Francisco: 1973*

Labour Board orders McDonald's to stop using lie detectors when hiring staff. Employees were asked whether they or others they knew had union sympathies.

*Chicago: 1978*

A worker asks the manager to recognise the union and negotiate a contract. Immediately staff are given a party, sports clothes, a free meal every day, enlarged cloak rooms with music. Management runs a press campaign against the unions, and tries to divide them. The Labour Board steps in, but the union eventually collapses.

*Germany: 1979*

Chief Personnel Officer sends out a circular which reads: "If you notice during the conversation that the candidate is a trade union member, bring the interview to a close after a few additional questions and tell him that he will receive a reply in a few days . . . do not hire him on any account."

*Spain: 1986*

The Labour Inspectorate has already fined McDonald's twice for refusing to hold union elections. Employees in Madrid decide to request elections. The 4 convenors of the meeting are sacked and only rehired after the Labour Inspectorate intervenes. Another 20 employees are transferred to other stores to remove the majority favouring elections.

### Unions Advance

But the 'non-conformists' refuse to be converted.

*Sweden and Ireland:*

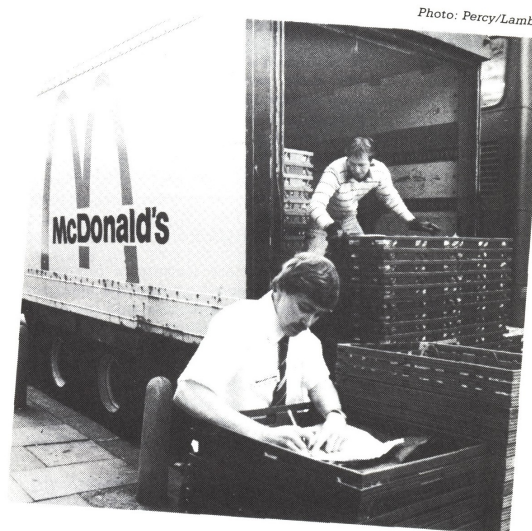
Swedish trade unions have good relations with management and regularly visit outlets to inform employees of their rights and recruit members. After a long struggle Dublin workers win union rights.

*Mexico City:*

Pickets stand day and night outside Mexico City's first McDonald's opened in late 1985. After a 3 week struggle the hotel and catering union wins full recognition with agreements on sick pay, holidays and paternity leave. But their demands for full-time employment on the minimum daily wage are refused.

*Nicaragua:*

The union wins sole negotiating rights, 3 hours a week paid time-off for union reps, and 90 days paid leave for all employees to attend union education programmes! McDonald's also agrees to help form a work's library, subsidise travel, provide transport after 7pm, and to pay half the cost of prescribed eye glasses. Every 2 months managers are to discuss the functioning of the corporation as a whole with employees.





**Dave Turnbull, TGWU and Service Workers Advisory & Action Project (SWAAP), talks about the challenge of McDonald's for unions.**

*"The main problem to building any organised base is the massive staff turnover which means membership turnover is going to be equally high. You've also the difficulty that the majority of jobs are part-time. So it's difficult to make them conscious of their problems and the need to organise."*

*"There are 2 points about the successes abroad:*

*1. In Spain, Nicaragua and Mexico they've had strong and positive trade union legislation which they've used in their efforts to organise. In this country we don't have the same central government legislation to back-up organisation. Instead we've got anti-trade union legislation and the weakening of employment rights.*

*2. Elsewhere, as in Mexico, the catering industry has had a strong tradition of trade union organisation. Whereas in this country only 6-10% of the general hotel and catering workforce are unionised so there's no tradition of organisation to back-up efforts in McDonald's. It's difficult for the trade union movement to decide priorities in an unorganised industry.*

*"The targets of the TGWU Link-Up and Living Wage campaigns are Trust House Forte and Ladbroke's, the biggest hotel chains with a more permanent and stable workforce where you can build long-term organising drives. Most resources are going there rather than to the growing fast food sector. The idea is that if you achieve trade union recognition in the biggest groups, the others will follow.*

*"At the moment we're a long way from tackling McDonald's but there are ways. The campaign demands - full-time rights for part-time workers, permanent rights for temporary workers - are correct ones for companies like McDonald's. The problem is how you organise people around those demands, how you begin to get in and*

*recruit members. There'd have to be a well organised campaign:*

*"1. You wouldn't have any result organising from outside with traditional leaflet campaigns. So we need to do it from inside, targeting one McDonald's and getting shop-stewards and activists into that store. Try to build it up over 3-6 months and then use it as a base for all the rest.*

*"2. To recruit key workers such as drivers and those who work at the main depots, in the more traditional way.*

*"Once you've built up members in the target store you can approach McDonald's for recognition, which they'd obviously turn down. Then you lead in with a dispute followed by a recruitment campaign in the other stores. Explain to workers the union's aims and what the dispute is about.*

*"Demands would depend on the members. There's a valid argument for part-time jobs becoming full-time. But if workers felt they needed part-time jobs then we have to make them on the same hourly rates, with the same rights as full-time jobs.*

*"You could also link up with community groups. Recently SWAAP ran a workshop in a school to increase awareness about the role of trade unions. That's one way to reach the young who go into McDonald's.*

*"From the Labour Party we'd like to see positive legislation on trade unions and employment rights. We're also discussing replacing the Wages Council with a statutory joint industrial council to get rid of the independents and have direct negotiations between employers and trade unions. There'd be no limits on what this could cover - so access to trade unions etc, would be drawn up in national agreements."*

The International Union of Food and Allied Workers (IUF), an association of unions around the world, is co-ordinating a campaign on McDonald's. Recognising that no transnational corporation (TNC) can be tackled on a national basis alone, the IUF supports local struggles and exchanges information on McDonald's operations and their collective agreements with unions in different countries. As part of a strategy to prevent the corporation breaking a union in one country it aims to contact McDonald's suppliers in Britain.

### Lean profits, fat wages?

Despite the problems there are pockets of unionised resistance in fast food. Casey Jones workers are members of the NUR; parts of Wimpy's distribution and transport sector are unionised; and Pizzaland managers have recently joined the TGWU. In Kingston KFC workers have joined GMB - the largest union in the industry with a special section, the Hotel and Catering Workers' Union. Their campaign for Fair Laws and Rights in Employment (FLARE) aims to step up recruitment and in the words of the General Secretary: "to put the law on the side of the low paid and the oppressed."

McDonald's has just spent £10 million on the Finchley HQ. A phenomenally profitable TNC McDonald's can well afford to employ full-time permanent workers or pay young people and part-timers equivalent rates.

TGWU  
Transport House  
Smith Square  
Westminster  
LONDON SW1P 3JB



The Transport and General Workers Union - the union for food industry employees. At the forefront in fighting for part-time and temporary workers' rights.

Ron Todd - General Secretary



# 7. Community Asset or Scourge?

## Stop the Barbarians

"The world's best neighbour," is the message at the heart of McDonald's relentless PR drive. "The Company believes in giving something back to the millions of people, the thousands of communities who have helped make it a success." The untold benefits cover everything from litter patrols to creating jobs. "You cannot expect to operate in a community," they say, "unless you are prepared to contribute to it." In 1985 UK Annual Report noted donations to charities of £130.

McDonald's tries to endear itself to the public and political authorities. For the opening of new outlets often evokes fierce local indignation and opposition. Swedish demonstrators threw smokebombs in protest against the "Americanisation of the economy". In Rome, where McDonald's ventured only after the laws on part-time work were relaxed, the campaign banner read: "Stop the Barbarians."

## Philippines Boycott

Aquino's murder in 1983 prompted mass demonstrations against the Marcos regime. McDonald's was one of the foreign companies boycotted for draining the economy and having "close connections" with high government officials. Immediately McDonald's placemats propagated that they were good for the community, detailing their contribution: "to the growth of a strong ... banking and financial system." They had cause to be worried: sales had dropped by 10%.

## Street Fight in Waltham Forest

In the UK McDonald's have had a more muted reception. Nevertheless, staking a claim in the high street presents its own problems. A protracted battle ensues every time McDonald's applies for planning permission. But they have perfected the art of municipal politics and rarely lose.

In 1986 McDonald's applied to Waltham Forest Council, London, for planning permission to open two new outlets. One was to convert an old House of Holland store in Chingford, an affluent residential area and Norman Tebbit's constituency. The second was to open a drive-thru in run-down Leytonstone.

In Chingford Norman Tebbit showed his own disfavour and letters flooded in to the council from over 800 residents, retailers and organisations ranging from the Green Party and London Transport to the Midland Bank and the Townswomen's Guild.

Opposition focussed on hazardous parking, noise and litter, an increase in loitering and general inconvenience. People felt their appetites were already well catered for by 11 nearby restaurants, mostly take-aways.

"McDonald's are vigorous campaigners", said an official in the Borough's Chief Executive office. "They are a smooth machine and anticipate decisions. They come with standardised plans and use the 1985 Access to Information Act to badger officers into seeing who's objecting."

## Your Good Health!

As you bite into your burger and fries, you can read how nutritious they are. The guide is McDonald's reply to the attacks of health campaigns which link fast food to cholesterol and heart disease. What the guide doesn't tell you is whether the fats are saturated or unsaturated; that the lettuce is drowned in chemicals to keep it "fresh". But as Ed Rensi, President for McDonald's USA said: "It's a good marketing program. It's a good way to sell our story."

In the US a \$20m campaign has backfired. Three states have threatened to sue the corporation for "deceptive" advertising. "McDonald's food is, as a whole, not nutritious", wrote the Texas Attorney General. "The intent and result of the current campaign is to deceive customers into believing the opposite. Fast food consumers often choose to go to McDonald's because it is inexpensive and convenient. They should not be fooled into eating there because you have told them it is nutritious." McDonald's dropped the ads. As a leaked internal memo noted: "We can't really address or defend nutrition."

Before long McDonald's took to the streets distributing the "Chingford Special Report" – a standardised leaflet for McDonald's countless local battles. "A treat for child and parents alike", locals are enticed with the lure of cheap, nutritious food in attractive surroundings from a company that cares for the environment. "Almost £0.75 million will be spent on fitting out McDonald's ... providing welcome investment to the town ... GIVE US YOUR SUPPORT. PLEASE SIGN THE PETITION."

The council received a detailed exposition. Should they, in common with other boroughs, be worried about loss of retail frontage in the high street, McDonald's argued: "Of the 199 trading restaurants and those currently under construction, 95% were Class 1 retail premises upon which the Company has obtained change of use application." At an estimated 8,000 per week: "More customers per square foot are served in a McDonald's restaurant than in most conventional shops."

The council turned down both applications. McDonald's will not be appealing against the Chingford decision. The only other time they went so quietly was in London's exclusive Hampstead.





## The Final Show-down

But McDonald's has fought tooth and nail for the drive-thru in Leytonstone. No sooner had their application been refused than their PR people were back on the streets with the Leytonstone Special Report. They collected 7,000 signatures, reportedly shoving the petition under the noses of motorists at traffic lights whether their registration plates showed Leytonstone or Peterborough!

The Report claimed "road improvements and access have now been agreed between McDonald's and the London Borough of Waltham Forest to allow the development to take place". Yet the Council had just refused planning permission! McDonald's were forced to apologise and withdrew the petition from the public enquiry.

It was not to McDonald's itself that the Council objected but the free-standing drive-thru. Out of character with the surrounding Victorian gables, the council pushed for design changes. McDonald's refused – designed in suburban Illinois, its freestanders are cloned throughout the world. The council then wanted them to move the building back several yards to allow more room for shoppers. McDonald's replied – it's computer designed. The phone to the US was constantly engaged, and only at the last minute did they concede.

More importantly, the drive-thru did not fit in with the council's plans. Leytonstone has lost out as shoppers and the retail trade have moved away, driven out by the street's unbearable traffic congestion and noise. The council wants to divert traffic away and rejuvenate this area with a pedestrian centre and new shops – drive-thrus run counter to these plans.

A 1985 government circular reminded planning authorities about their obligations to presume in favour of development on planning applications. An application can now only be refused if it will cause "demonstrable harm" to some particular interest. As one official said, in the past more importance was given to local plans with long consultation and appropriateness of land use. "The presumption is," said a London councillor, "if there's money, go ahead!"

On 8 July 1987 McDonald's were given the green light when the Secretary of State at the Department of the Environment ruled in their favour. It's not the first time central government has proved a powerful ally.

When Putney council refused them on the grounds of loss of retail space, McDonald's appealed successfully to the Department of the Environment who stated that: "Whilst conflicting with the criteria laid down in the Borough Plan (McDonald's) would not seriously damage the council's shopping policy." Time and again, from Staines to Nottingham and Eastbourne, councils have been pressured to concede to McDonald's development plans.

## Environment: Friend or FOE?

Nearly 40% of the forest cover in Central America has been destroyed. The land is now pasture for the cattle that supply cheap beef to North America's fast food industry. Burger King admits to importing beef. But McDonald's, the largest beef buyer in the world, have categorically denied allegations that they use Central American beef in the US.

"McDonald's USA and Canada has never purchased imported beef from Central or South America for use in their hamburgers... Should any organisation... state or infer that McDonald's is involved in any way in buying beef from the Central or South American rain forest area, for use in the US... we will issue immediate legal proceedings against them."

Surprised at the litigious tone of this letter, Friends of the Earth (FOE) replied:

"It still appears to us that your organisation is unable to prove categorically that it does not buy beef from Central American sources. As we discussed this has nothing to do with McDonald's intentions to use domestically produced beef, but quite simply from an inadequate labelling system... (which labels all beef whether imported or domestically produced as domestic once it has been passed satisfactory to consume...) Until the US Department of Agriculture's labelling methods are changed, all users of beef in the fast food industry will therefore be liable, if only by implication, to charges that they are involved in using beef which has been reared on pastures cleared from Central American rainforest."



## Jobs at any Price?

McDonald's is an equal opportunities employer bringing jobs to the high street. However its "knock-on" effects are limited given that, apart from local dairies or window cleaners, its suppliers are centralised and often not even in the UK.

"The council has shown itself to be anxious not merely that people have jobs but about the quality of those jobs" read the Green Party's submission to Chingford. "We are concerned about the standards of employment that this restaurant will bring to local people." Although planning committees have no power over employment practices, the new Economic Development Units are tackling issues such as the provision of training. And there are other avenues local authorities can pursue.

One move is the strict enforcement of existing regulations. Cases have been brought against McDonald's under the Shops Act in Luton and Guildford. In Slough the senior Education Welfare Officer took McDonald's to court for breaking the child employment laws.

"The whole industry gets away with it all over the country, depending on kids who are shamelessly exploited," she says. "It's profitable enough for McDonald's to ignore the law. We don't have much time to investigate or to do anything when we find they're breaking the law. This is just one of our duties so it's not a priority. We could do much more about juvenile employment, however, if they doubled the number of officers. Local authorities can take action. It's part of their job and it's their duty."

# MacDonald's fined over kitchen boy

**SCHOOLBOY Robert Nemeth landed McDonald's in hot fat when the hamburger giants were ordered by Slough magistrates to pay fines and costs totalling nearly £1,500 over their breach of child employment rules.**

But McDonald's said in their defence that if Robert — who was 16 at the time —

had been born just two days earlier, no regulations would have been broken.

In what the company said was the first such court case against them in Britain, magistrates were told that the fast-food outlet, in Slough High Street, broke several by-laws by giving the 16-year-old Herschel High School pupil too much work

and involving him in kitchen duties.

And it was said that the restaurant manager, Mr Sampal, insisted that Robert — then revising for nine O-Level exams — came into work one day when he did not want to work and was complaining of feeling tired from the previous day.

McDonald's, who pleaded guilty to 14 breaches of Berkshire County Council's by-laws on the employment of

young people under school-leaving age, were fined a total of £1,400, with £90 costs.

Prosecuting solicitor David Brown said Robert, now 17,

- Should never have been given work in a commercial kitchen;
- Worked more than the statutory maximum of two hours on schooldays; and
- Worked beyond the statutory 7 pm limit on schooldays and Saturdays.

Mr Brown also said that Robert was given a 30-minute break and another of 15 minutes during one nine-hour shift when the regulations allowed young people at least one hour's rest after four hours' work.

The solicitor said the by-laws were designed to protect children's health, to prohibit certain work such as in commercial kitchens and to prevent the substitution of cheap child labour for adults.

Slough Express, 12.9.84

## Planning for Fast Food

In recent years progressive councils' economic policies have shifted towards more direct intervention in production. Councils are developing co-ordinated strategies for catering and the food industry which tackle the quality of jobs, services and products available to the public. Initiatives already taken point the way forward for fast food.

- Local councils, and their enterprise boards, have begun to invest in the food sector. Merseyside Enterprise Board, for example, has invested in El Andino, a Mexican fast food store. There are openings in the market for stores which guarantee nutritious fast food, union representation and decent employment conditions. Camden Council provided finance and training for Applejacks, a cafe employing people with special needs.

- A study of the Merseyside food industry by the Enterprise Board and the Centre for Local Economic Strategies recommended establishing forums for local businesses to meet consultants, youth and women's groups, the Council's education and health departments and trade unions to consider product development, working conditions, and opportunities for expansion.

- Fast food giants like McDonald's benefit from economies of scale and control of their own suppliers and transport. The same study proposed that councils help smaller businesses co-operate over warehousing, transport and bulk-purchasing.

- Economic Development Units are promoting the provision of training by local training bodies and employers to upgrade workers' skills. There are obvious benefits for fast food workers from courses in catering, nutrition and diet, technology and food economics.

- Effective intervention depends upon a broad alliance of interest groups. Councils have supported existing campaigns on food, and developed their own, which both broaden the public's awareness and extract specific concessions from employers. ILEA has shown what can be done — they got companies to reduce the sugar content in baked beans.

These few examples show the potential for intervening in fast food. There are no easy answers but one thing is sure: McDonald's has Big Plans for Britain!

## Justice on the High Street

Unjust wages and conditions run throughout the multinational fast food chains. Yet with their meaty profits they can, and should, provide proper jobs to their workers.

McDonald's concerns us all – whether we are residents, consumers, workers, parents or members of trade unions and local councils. And its high profile makes it as vulnerable as it is profitable. Whilst there is no co-ordinated campaign on McDonald's, things are happening which we can all support.

The unions are campaigning for a new set of legal rights to protect young, part-time and temporary workers. Local authorities are planning for fast food and intervening accordingly. Consumer groups, such as the London Food Commission (Promotions) are pressurising the food industry to reduce the saturated fats, chemical additives and sugar in their products. Other organisations are calling for an end to low pay in the service sector. The time has come for justice to return to the high street.

\*\*\* If you know anything about McDonald's, especially if you've worked there, we want to hear from you! In the next 15 hours McDonald's will be celebrating the opening of yet another store . . .

## The McEnd



Photo: Percy/Lamb





# Get in Touch

## Trade Unions

The main trade unions working with fast food are:

**GMB (General, Municipal and Boilermakers' and Allied Trades Union – including the Hotel and Catering Workers' Union)**, Thorne House, Ruxley Ridge, Claygate, Surrey KT10 0TI. 0273 62081.

**TGWU (Transport and General Workers' Union)**, Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3JB. 01-828 7788.

**USDAW (Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers)**, Oakley, 188 Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 6LJ. 061-224 2804.

**IUF (International Union of Food and Allied Workers)**, McDonald's Working Group, Rampe Du Pont-Rouge 8, CH-1213, Pt Lancy, Geneva, Switzerland. An association to which national unions affiliate, campaigning on McDonald's.

## Advice and Information

**TICL (Transnational Information Centre London)**. 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG. 01-734 5902. Provides information about transnational corporations to local authorities, trade unionists and community groups to support campaigns and extend international support.

**SWAAP (Service Workers Action and Advisory Project)**, Dave Turnbull, Room 160, South Bank House, Black Prince Road, London SE1. 01-587 1435.

**LOW PAY UNIT**. 9 Upper Berkeley Street, London W1H 8BY. 01-262 7278. They can give information, are monitoring the effects of the Wages Act and want to hear about your experience. They also have regional offices.

**WAGES COUNCILS**. Mr Wood, Clifton House, 83 Euston Road, London. 01-387 2511. They set legally enforceable minimum wages for workers over 21 in certain types of work, including fast food and catering.

**LONDON FOOD COMMISSION**. Tim Lobstein, 88 Old Street, London EC1V 9AR. 01-253 9513. An independent watch-dog concerned with the production and consumption of good quality food. Has a project on nutrition and fast food.

**CENTRE FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC STRATEGIES**. Heron House, Brazennose Street, Manchester M2 5HD. 061 824 7036 Supports local authorities and other relevant organisations developing local economic strategies.

## Read all about it

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Many thanks go to all the McDonald's workers and store managers who spoke to us. Also to John Kabbash, Steve Bell, Warren Garrett and officials at Waltham Forest, Simon Counsell (FOE), Clare Smith, Richard Beard, Rosalind Allen, Nick, Jenny and Dave Turnbull at SWAAP, Patrique Dalde and Bob Ramsay (IUF), Robin Murray.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST McDONALDS  
PO BOX 1008,  
GLASGOW, G42 8AA  
Telephone/Answerphone/Fax: (0141) 226 5066  
9th June 1995

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Dear Madam/Sir,

I am delighted to announce the formation of Glasgow's first group determined to Campaign Against McDonalds! Founded recently, we have secured both office space and telephone/fax facilities.

More importantly: the group has succeeded in producing what has proven to be a highly effective leaflet which invariably causes a strong reaction whenever we have distributed it to the public.

Campaigners undertake city centre information stalls on a regular basis, together with peaceful protests at various Big Mac outlets. At present, incensed members are vigorously opposing plans to open burger shops on hospital sites, the first one being Yorkhill Childrens Hospital. Given Glasgow's notorious public health and hygiene record, it seems appropriate that the trash food giant's activities should remain unopposed.

Consequently, the Campaign against McDonalds has set itself a target of publishing and distributing some 250,000 leaflets in our first twelve months. Hopefully, you will be kind enough to publicise our activities in your newsletter or magazine. We are also launching a desperate appeal for cash. If your organisation could make a grant or donation available we would be most grateful. [Cheques payable to: Campaign Against McDonalds, please]

Thank you for your attention,  
Kind regards,

Lesley Boulton.  
Campaign Co-ordinator.

PS: I have included copies of our new leaflet for any comments, suggestions, criticisms you may wish to make.



***Is*** a high-fat, low-fibre diet linked to heart disease and cancer?

***Are*** children being exploited by advertising?

***Do*** McDonald's exploit their low-paid, non-unionised workers?

***Can*** mountains of disposable packaging be justified?

***Are*** McDonald's responsible for rainforest destruction?

***Do*** the billions of animals raised for the food industry suffer?

***Should*** cattle have priority over indigenous people for land?

judge for yourself...



<http://www.McSpotlight.org/>

*"It is claimed to be 'the most comprehensive source of information on a multinational ever assembled' - and that doesn't sound like an exaggeration." - The Guardian.*

## The Final Nail in the Coffin of McDonald's Global Censorship Strategy

The **McSpotlight** worldwide web site was launched on Feb 16th 1996 in London, Chicago, Helsinki and Auckland. Its aim is simple - to make freely available across the globe accurate, factual, up-to-date information about the McDonald's Corporation and all they stand for (of pressing importance given their ongoing attempts to silence their critics). In its first month it was accessed over a million times (including 1,300 times by McDonald's themselves) and it has received press coverage all over the world: *USA Today* (front cover), *Channel 4*, *Times of India*, *Chicago Tribune*, *BBC Radio 4*, *NBC TV*, *Die Tageszeitung*, *The Australian*, *Stern* magazine, *Observer*, *Independent*, *LA Weekly*, *Helsingen Snomat* (Finland) etc.

As one of the new breed of Internet sites starting to make full use of the world's most powerful communication system, McSpotlight combines text, graphics, video and audio into an accessible and interactive package that can be used by campaigners, journalists, researchers, scientists, and surfers alike - not to mention all McDonald's customers and employees wanting to find out the reality behind the Golden Arches.

The infamous **McLibel Trial** and the issues at its heart (*diet and ill-health, destruction of the environment, animal welfare, exploitation of children through advertising and workers through low pay*) provide the focus for the site, but it is not just McDonald's in the McSpotlight. As the most carefully manicured, defensive and possibly the most arrogant corporation, they have been used as a symbol of all transnational corporations maximising their profits at the expense of people, animals and the environment.

### McSpotlight key features:

1,800 files - approx 90 McLibel witness statements, scores of other documents about the case, company publications, scientific reports, newspaper articles, cartoons, extracts from books, transcripts of TV and video appearances, plays, internal company memos and so on.

The Debating Room - a moderated discussion group within the website, providing a global forum for discussion and debate about McDonald's and all they stand for.

RealAudio Guided Tour - the McLibel Defendants take you around the site telling the story of the McLibel case and pointing out McSpotlight's key pages and features.

Guided Tour of McDonald's own website - McSpotlight takes you round McDonald's site (using 'Frames' for Netscape 2.0) pointing out all the inaccuracies and untruths.

Campaigns - autonomous pages for 24 countries (many run by local campaigners).

RealAudio interviews - with the McLibel Defendants and others.

Video Clips (Quicktime Movies) - including a key piece of evidence from the trial linking McDonald's with rainforest destruction.

The McQuiz - satirical quiz using quotes from McDonald's executives to emphasise the company's immoral strategy and attitude.

Previously suppressed material - escapees from earlier censorship attempts by McDonald's (including 'Working for Big Mac').

Other McLibels - details of other law suits brought by McDonald's against the media, trade unions and campaigners.

Beyond McDonald's - other corporations in the McSpotlight, including Nestle, Pepsi, Unilever, Shell, Smithkline Beecham, Burger King, Kodak, Marlboro and ICI.

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McSpotlight has been constructed by the McInformation Network, an international network of volunteers working from 14 countries. It is autonomous from, but supportive of, the McLibel 2 and the McLibel Support Campaign.

Email: [info@mcspotlight.org](mailto:info@mcspotlight.org) - Snailmail: PO Box 10792, London N10 3PQ, UK

Mailing list: send email to [listproc@envirolink.org](mailto:listproc@envirolink.org) with the message subscribe mcspotlight <your full name>



# DO YOU WORK FOR McDONALD'S?

(OR KNOW ANYONE WHO DOES? - IF SO, PASS THIS ON)

## ARE YOU SICK OF LOW WAGES?

Would you prefer a decent pay rise, guaranteed hours, overtime pay and an end to humiliating "performance reviews"?

## ARE YOU SICK OF SEEING PEOPLE INJURED?

Even McDonald's admit that burns, slips and falls etc are BIG problems.

## ARE YOU SICK OF BEING BOSSED AROUND?

Do you want RIGHTS, and freedom from being constantly watched and treated like being in the Army? Do you want an end to harassment and unfair dismissals?

## ARE YOU SICK OF POOR WORKING CONDITIONS?

Do you want relief from continual pressures to work hard, to 'hustle', to cut corners with safety procedures? Do you want decent breaks, and to smile when YOU feel like it?

## ARE YOU SICK OF McDONALD'S?

Are you fed up with all the crawling to bigwigs from Head Office, the company's inane propaganda, and their processed food?

## DO YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT ?

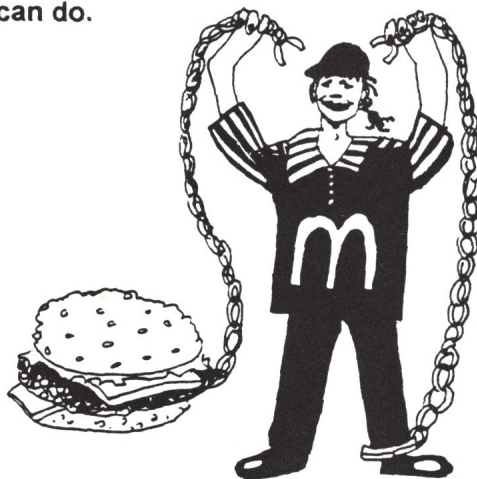
Did you know that McDonald's spends **\$1.8 billion** worldwide every year on ads and promotions to boost their image - yet they can't, for example, find a single penny to pay overtime. The aim is: get profits UP, and wage costs DOWN.

No wonder so many chuck the job in. But those who stay can fight to improve things....**See over for details of what you can do.**

### DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH McDONALD'S WORKERS OCTOBER 12th 1996

This day marks the **fourth anniversary of the death of Mark Hopkins**, a worker electrocuted at a McDonald's store in Manchester. We are again calling a countrywide (and international) *Day of Solidarity With McDonald's Workers* on that day, following last year's successful event. WE CALL FOR LEAFLETING AT LOCAL STORES - leaflets available from us at address overleaf. There will also be pickets in **Manchester** (86 Market Street. Noon to 1pm) and **London** (McDonald's at Leicester Square. 5 to 7pm).

"I want every McDonald's worker to stand up for their rights, which is why I am backing this campaign 100%. In this way, Mark's death will not have been in vain." -  
Maureen Hopkins. Mark's mother.



# STANDING UP TO McDONALD'S

There have been disputes and strikes in a number of countries, and in some the company has been forced to accept trade unions and workers' rights. In Canada recently, a 16 year old crew member, keeping it secret from management, single-handedly **signed up over half of the workers** in her store into a trade union. In 1994 in France, **five Store Managers were arrested** for refusing to recognise crew members' rights and trade union elections in their stores. A strike has also taken place there.

**McDonald's On Trial At The High Court** - The company's business practices have been under the spotlight in a mammoth libel trial at the High Court in London. Two supporters of London Greenpeace have defended leaflets criticising McDonald's, including a whole section criticising crew pay and conditions. 35 ex-workers came forward to help them by giving evidence of what really goes on inside the stores. This has benefitted all McDonald's workers by forcing the company onto the defensive. **So now's the time to organise!**

**"It's their right to join a Union if they so choose."**

Paul Preston (McDonald's UK President) in the High Court, 5th July 1994

**WHAT YOU CAN DO** - Obviously you'll need to be careful. But you can:

- **copy these leaflets** to give secretly to your mates, including at other stores
- find out and **demand your legal rights**, and use company grievance procedures
- anonymously **tip off local press and others** about in-store conditions (including food quality and hygiene)
- **refuse to play the 'hustle' game**
- **build up solidarity** amongst staff by getting together in the crew room, or better still by socialising together or organising meetings outside the store to talk about problems
- secretly **join a trade union** and get others to do so as well.

Why not access the **'McSpotlight' Internet site** (<http://www.mcspotlight.org/>). Join the many McDonald's workers and managers sharing their views and experiences by contributing to the McSpotlight on-line discussion forum - the **Workers' Debating Room**.

**HOW WE CAN HELP** - We are trades unionists and low paid workers like yourselves who've clubbed together to set up the **Support Network for McDonald's Workers**. We can provide information on your legal rights - industrial tribunals, health and safety rights, employment and anti-discrimination laws.

We can send you more of these leaflets (free to workers), plus more detailed ones. Also general advice on standing up to McDonald's - we've had the same sort of experiences as you! Most importantly we're building up a nationwide support network to provide information and to promote solidarity for all McDonald's workers wanting to fight for their rights. We know that people gain confidence and strength when they have back-up.

**Some McDonald's workers have already contacted us about getting involved. How about you and your workmates? For more details, fill out the tear-off slip or contact us on the number below. Send us your ideas or grievances! All info treated confidentially.**

Please send me more information about the **Support Network for McDonald's Workers**.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: Support Network for McDonald's Workers, c/o MSC, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX.

Other contacts: **01603 611072** (south) / **0161 231 8177** (north)



# McLibel Support Campaign

c/o 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX, UK. Tel/fax 0171 713 1269

## Trial News January 1995

The High Court libel trial brought by the \$24 billion a year McDonald's Corporation against two unwaged London Greenpeace Supporters began in June 1994 and is now expected to last until December 1995. It looks certain to become one of the longest libel trials ever.

The libel is alleged to have occurred in 1989/90. Approximately 170 witnesses from the UK and around the world are giving evidence in court on all the issues in the case, namely:

- ◆ The connection between multinational companies like McDonald's, cash crops and starvation in the third world.
- ◆ The responsibility of corporations such as McDonald's for damage to the environment, including destruction of rainforests.
- ◆ The wasteful and harmful effects of the mountains of packaging used by McDonald's and other companies.
- ◆ McDonald's promotion and sale of food with a low fibre, high fat, saturated fat, sodium and sugar content, and the links between a diet of this type and the major degenerative diseases in western society, including heart disease and cancer.
- ◆ McDonald's exploitation of children by its use of advertisements and gimmicks to sell unhealthy products.
- ◆ The barbaric way that animals are reared and slaughtered to supply products for McDonald's.
- ◆ The lousy conditions that workers in the catering industry are forced to work under, and the low wages paid by McDonald's.
- ◆ McDonald's hostility towards trade unions.

Here follows a summary of some of the evidence from the first 6 months of the trial:

### NUTRITION

**"Kiss of Death"** - The Defendants asked **Dr Sydney Arnott** (McDonald's expert on cancer) his opinion of the following statement: **"A diet high in fat, sugar, animal products and salt and low in fibre, vitamins and minerals is linked with cancer of the breast and bowel and heart disease". He replied: "If it is being directed to the public then I would say it is a very reasonable thing to say."** The court was then informed that the statement was an extract from the London Greenpeace Factsheet. This section had been characterised at pre-trial hearings as the central and most "defamatory" allegation, which if proven would be the "kiss of death"▽ for a fast-food company like McDonald's. On the strength of the supposed scientific complexities surrounding this issue the Defendants had been denied their right to a jury.

▽ Richard Rampton QC for McDonald's, Court of Appeal, 16th March 1994

McDonald's expert witness **Professor Verner Wheelock**, a consultant engaged by the company since 1991, admitted that there is a considerable amount of evidence that diseases such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease (which he said was the "number one health problem of the nation"), stroke and some forms of cancer are related to a diet high in fat, saturated fat salt and sugar and low in dietary fibre. He agreed that "We have now reached the point where we can be very confident that diet is the primary factor in the development of most of the degenerative diseases in many industrialised countries" (including cancer). He also agreed with government dietary recommendations based on such views. He admitted that a typical McDonald's meal was high in fat, saturated fat and sodium content (Paul Preston McDonald's UK President had earlier admitted that McDonald's products were low in fibre) and would not come within dietary recommendations and further that it was "not sensible" to encourage the eating of foods high in fat, saturated fat, sugar and sodium (salt) and low in fibre. He accepted that people were attracted to high levels of sugar and salt and found it hard to give up the taste.

McDonald's claims to support official 'Health of the Nation' dietary initiatives to improve the population's health but **John Hawkes**, Chief Marketing Officer, admitted this had had no effect on their marketing department. McDonald's does not have a department responsible solely for nutrition. **Edward Oakley**, Senior Vice President of McDonald's UK, admitted that "it is not felt to be an important enough issue to have a separate nutritional department like McDonald's have marketing or communications departments".

**Geoffrey Cannon**, Chairperson of the National Food Alliance of consumer organisations, and scientific director of the World Cancer Research Fund, was called by the Defendants as an expert on public health policy. He stated that the US government, European Union, and World Health Organisation all recommended reducing consumption of fatty foods and increasing consumption of fruit, vegetables and other foods containing fibre in order to prevent a significant proportion of the large number of deaths each year from heart disease (200,000 in the UK) and cancer (160,000 in the UK). The 1990 World Health Organisation (WHO) Report stated "*dietary factors are now known to influence the development of...heart disease, various cancers, hypertension...and diabetes*". These conditions are the commonest cause of premature death in developed countries. ...The 'affluent' type of diet that often accompanies economic development is



# what's wrong with **Ronald McDonald ?**



## Ronald lies to children



- \* McDonald's food is NOT healthy
- \* Farm animals are NOT well cared for or happy
- \* McDonald's DON'T care about the environment
- \* Their workers work very hard for little money

Ronald

## damaging the earth



natural forests are cut down for space  
to raise cows to 'make' meat,  
or to make paper for  
packaging

'Fast food' packaging,  
whether paper or plastic, is chucked  
away as rubbish. It's not even  
recycled - what a waste!

Ronald

## killing animals

millions of chickens, cows and  
pigs are cruelly imprisoned  
and then killed to make meat  
for burgers and McNuggets

- but we don't have to eat meat at all





Ronald

## harming your health

'junk food' (like hamburgers, shakes and fries) is not good for you. It has lots of fat, sugar, salt and additives in it, but little fresh fruit, vegetables or salad

Ronald

## robbing the poor

lots of land in poor countries is used for cows, or to grow grain to feed cows, so hungry people can't grow food for themselves

**DON'T BE TRICKED BY THE 'CLOWN'!**  
or by adverts and 'free' toys

## what you can do

- \* try to eat healthy food
- \* show your friends this leaflet
- \* make copies to give out at school

**you can help save the environment!**  
**you can help stop cruelty to animals!**

PRINTED ON  
RECYCLED PAPER



Note: McDonald's spend nearly 2 billion dollars each year on advertising, promotional gimmicks and propaganda. This leaflet is an attempt to put over the truth. There's much more to say - about how McDonald's exploits their workers with hard work, low pay and no Trade Union rights...about how the company pretends to support kids and the community, but only seeks to get more publicity and more customers etc. It's not just McDonald's - all big companies are similar. It's up to us to think for ourselves and to get together to make the world a better place.



Help launch a NETWORK FOR KIDS AGAINST McDONALD'S. More leaflets and information from:

- \* LONDON GREENPEACE : 5 Caledonian Rd, London N1 (0171 713 1269)
- \* McSPOTLIGHT (on the Internet) : <http://www.mcspotlight.org/>
- \* VIVA! (about vegetarianism) : P.O. Box 212, Crewe, Cheshire CW1 (01270 522500)

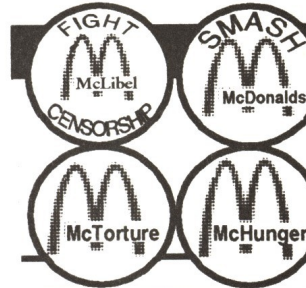
# McLIBEL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN

merchandise



**T-Shirt 1** MSC1 - 100% pure unbleached cotton T-shirt. Printed on both front & back. Front- "McDonalds Vs London Greenpeace"; back "Fight Censorship". Size XL only. Price - £5

**T-Shirt 2** MSC2 - Red with black design. Front printed with the "McGarbage" slogan and nothing printed on the back. Size XL only. Price - £5



## BADGES

MSC4,5,6 & 7

Choice of badges.  
Price- 20p each

## VIDEO MSC8 - £5

Produced by supporters of the McLibel Campaign. This video lasts approx 15 minutes and has interviews with the two defendants as well as useful footage about McDonalds. Ideal for talks, campaigning, or short video screenings. Not to be missed.

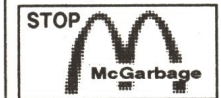
## STICKERS MSC3 48 stickers, each measuring approx 3" by 4". Set of eight separate designs, and all printed black on bright yellow. Price - £1 for 48 (6 x set of 8)

**STOP**  
the meat industry  
imprisoning,  
torturing and  
murdering millions  
of animals



organise now for a better world  
PEOPLE AND NATURE - NOT PROFITS

**STOP**  
multinationals  
producing  
toxic waste  
and pollution



organise now for a better world  
PEOPLE AND NATURE - NOT PROFITS

**STOP**  
cattle ranching  
destroying  
forests,  
wildlife and  
the soil



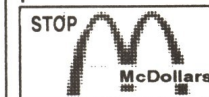
organise now for a better world  
PEOPLE AND NATURE - NOT PROFITS

**STOP**  
multinationals  
stealing and  
squandering the  
world's resources  
while millions starve



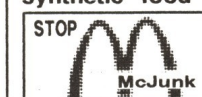
organise now for a better world  
PEOPLE AND NATURE - NOT PROFITS

**STOP**  
multinationals  
exploiting society's  
needs and  
resources for the  
profit of a few



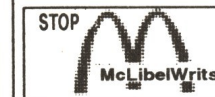
organise now for a better world  
PEOPLE AND NATURE - NOT PROFITS

**STOP**  
multinationals  
promoting  
and pushing  
unhealthy  
synthetic "food"



organise now for a better world  
PEOPLE AND NATURE - NOT PROFITS

**STOP**  
multinationals  
spouting propaganda  
and suppressing  
criticism and  
opposition



organise now for a better world  
PEOPLE AND NATURE - NOT PROFITS

**STOP**  
multinationals  
exploiting workers  
- low pay, hard  
and degrading  
work, no unions



organise now for a better world  
PEOPLE AND NATURE - NOT PROFITS



# McLIBEL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN

order form

Enter the item(s) and quantity you want below, along with your name, address and phone number if applicable. There is a space for donations, if you would like to support the campaign financially. Please add 10% for postage and packing. Complete the form in block capitals as it makes it easier for us to read, and we will try and get all goods back to you within 28 days unless we are waiting for things to be delivered to us. Finally, thanks for your support.

Code	Description	Price	Qty.	Total
MSC1	100% unbleached t/Shirt	5.00		
MSC2	Red "McGarbage" t/Shirt	5.00		
MSC3	48 stickers	1.00		
MSC4	McMurder, McTorture, etc badge	0.20		
MSC5	McProfits, McHunger, etc badge	0.20		
MSC6	SMASH McDonalds badge	0.20		
MSC7	Fight censorship badge	0.20		
MSC8	Video	5.00		
TOTAL OF GOODS ORDERED				
10% (UK) & 20% (elsewhere) Postage & Packing				
Donation - if possible				
<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b>				

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Phone No: .....

Please make cheques payable to "McLibel Support Campaign" and send to  
5, Caledonian Road, London, N1.